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ABSTRACT

Proceedings of a conference on art history, art criticism, studio art, and aesthetics are presented. An overview entitled "For a New Beginning" outlines Pennsylvania's new curriculum requirements and their relationship to art education. Listings follow which cover Pennsylvania's goals of quality education and arts and humanities objectives respectively. The proceedings contain four position papers presented at the conference. The authors and titles are: "The Discipline of Art History: A Basis for Learning" (Mary Erickson); "A Study of Art Criticism in the Classroom" (Evan J. Kern); "The Studio Artist: A Component of a K-12 School Art Curriculum" (Diana Korzenik); and "Aesthetics, Cornerstone of the Art Curriculum" (Vincent Lanier). References and bibliographies accompany the position papers. (JH)

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COMING TOGETHER AGAIN
ART HISTORY - ART CRITICISM - ART STUDIO - AESTHETICS

FOUR CURRICULUM MODELS

For A New Beginning

Position Papers By
Mary Erickson
Evan J. Kern
Diana Korzenik
Vincent Lanier

The 41st ART CONFERENCE

Eldon Katter, Coordinator

KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
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KUTZTOWN UNIVERSITY
1984

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The Studio Artist: A Component Of A K-12 School
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Aesthetics, Cornerstone Of The Art Curriculum
Vincent Lanier

The State Board of Education's new curriculum requirements provide art educators with an exciting challenge to re-examine the discipline of art eduction, its relationship to other disciplines, and the value of traditional educational experiences in art.

We can choose to ignore the challenge, accept our traditional programs as the best that can be, and pay minimal lip-service to the required learning objectives that form the basis of the new regulations. Of course, that plan of non-action raises issues of honesty, integrity and professional ethics.

Curriculum requirements are not to be taken lightly. We must all accept the challenge as an opportunity for a new beginning and use this coming year to devise more effective programs in art education.

The four position papers presented at the 41st Kutztown Art Conference and reproduced in this document poignantly address the new curriculum regulations. Collectively they inspire reflection, raise issues for dialogue, and provide a focus for the clarification of purpose. The authors were invited to participate in this conference on the basis of their scholarly inquiry, appropriate publication topics, and a shared concern for the future of art education. Each scholar was invited to study Chapter 5 and report on its implications for a K-12 art curriculum modeled on the skills of a specific sub-discipline of art - art history, art criticism, art studio and aesthetics. These areas were specified not only because they provide the primary source of the content of art education, but also because the study of each area seemed to be mandated by the language of the Arts and Humanities objectives in

the new curriculum regulations, as illustrated in the following diagram.

Chapter 5 Requirement	Implied Area Of Study
Comprehension of principles and concepts in art, music, craftsmanship, other discrete arts, and the humanities.	AESTHETIC LITERACY
Participation in intellectual and creative experiences in the arts.	AESTHETIC RESPONSE
Understanding of the influence of literature, philosophy, and tradition in shaping our heritage.	ART HISTORY and its relationship to other disciplines
Application of objective and aesthetic criteria to decision making.	ART CRITICISM
Development of analytic and performing skills in the arts and humanities.	ART STUDIO and the production of works of art.

Although other implications are evident and while there are no clear-cut parallels, the comparisons noted above inspired the theme for the 41st Art Conference.

The idea of art education as a discipline to be studied is not new. About twenty years ago, participants in the Penn State Seminar agreed that art education derived its language, concepts, and processes from the field of art history, art criticism, and art studio practice. In 1966, Manuel Barkan spoke of the art educator's need to "synthesize the knowledge in art of the artist, and the knowledge about art of the aesthetician, the critic, and the historian". More recently, W. Dwaine Greer, Director of the Getty Institute for Education in the Visual Arts, has provided the label "discipline-based art education" to describe systematic art instruction integrating art history, art criticism,

studio art, and aesthetics.

New labels describing approaches to teaching come and go rather frequently, yet much of what is done in the schools remains the same. Curriculum regulations, however, are slow to change. It has been almost ten years since Pennsylvania has had new curriculum requirements. The new Arts and Humanities objectives present a significant departure from the old regulations. They deserve our serious attention for they mandate change. The position papers included in this document can provide us with stimulating dialogue for a new beginning.

Eldon Katter

Conference Coordinator

GOALS OF QUALITY EDUCATION

(Adopted by the State Board of Education on March 8, 1979)

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
Quality education should help every student acquire communication skills of understanding, speaking, reading and writing.

MATHEMATICS
Quality education should help every student acquire skills in mathematics.

SELF-ESTEEM
Quality education should help every student develop self-understanding and a feeling of self-worth.

ANALYTICAL THINKING
Quality education should help every student develop analytical thinking skills.

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS
Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge of different cultures and an appreciation of the worth of all people.

CITIZENSHIP
Quality education should help every student learn the history of the nation, understand its systems of government and economics and acquire the values and attitudes necessary for responsible citizenship.

ARTS AND THE HUMANITIES
Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge, appreciation and skills in the arts and the humanities.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge, understanding and appreciation of science and technology.

WORK
Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a self-supporting member of society.

FAMILY LIVING
Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for successful personal and family living.

HEALTH
Quality education should help every student acquire knowledge and develop practices necessary to maintain physical and emotional well-being.

ENVIRONMENT
Quality education should help every student acquire the knowledge and attitudes necessary to maintain the quality of life in a balanced environment.

NEW CHAPTER 5 CURRICULUM REGULATIONS

ARTS AND HUMANITIES OBJECTIVES

Quality education shall help every student acquire knowledge, appreciation and skills in the arts and the humanities. Objectives are:

Comprehension of principles and concepts in art, music, craftsmanship, other discrete arts, and the humanities.

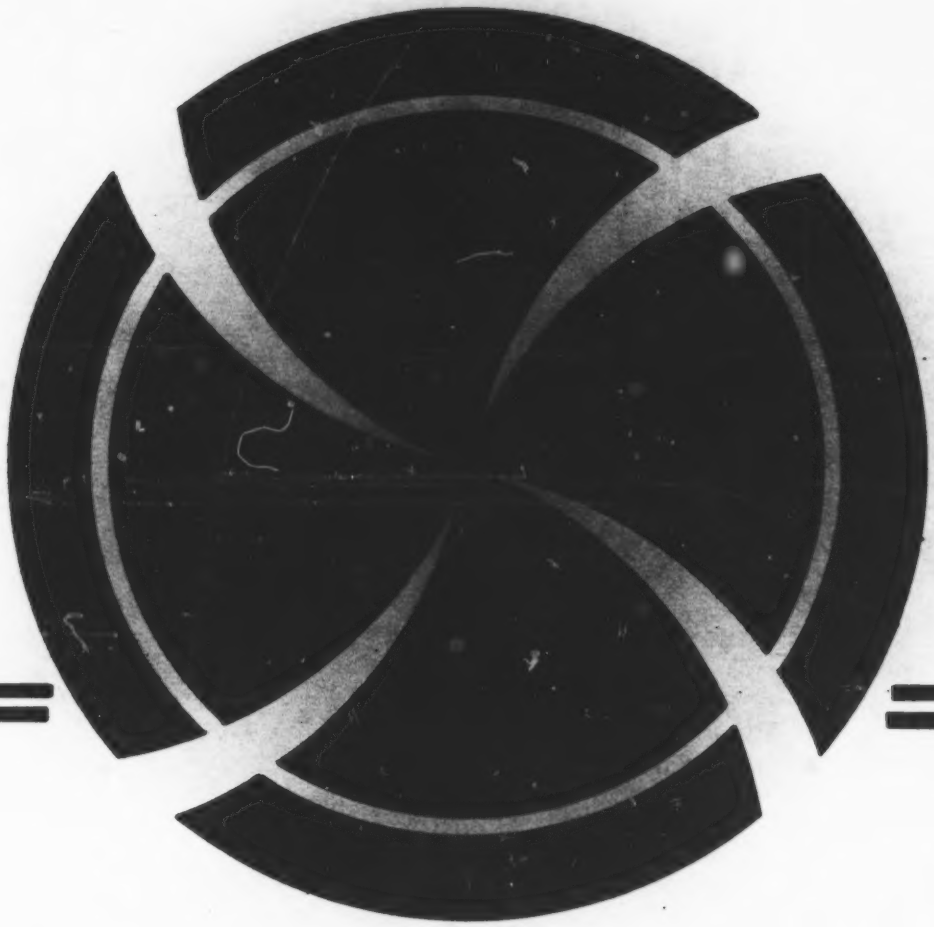
Understanding of the influence of literature, philosophy, and tradition in shaping our heritage.

Development of analytic and performing skills in the arts and the humanities.

Application of objective and aesthetic criteria to decision-making.

Participation in intellectual and creative experiences in the arts and humanities.

Art History



THE DISCIPLINE OF ART HISTORY: A BASIS FOR LEARNING

by

Mary Erickson

"Coming Together Again"

Kutztown University of Pennsylvania

October 26, 1984

INTRODUCTION

This paper has three goals: 1. to outline the inquiry process of the art historian, 2. to demonstrate how the inquiry process of the art historian can be coordinated with many of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education's Goals and Learning Objectives, and 3. to suggest how art programs might be developed to teach art historical inquiry from kindergarten through high school.

Those of us who teach art are used to the idea of planning lessons which require our students to act as artists act. Art classrooms tend to be active places where the student selects or is assigned a problem and where each student works individually to solve that problem. In the best situations the discipline of the artist is a model for the behavior of the student. The student is expected to use resources, invent solutions, generate new ideas, follow through on those ideas, and even judge when his or her work is sufficiently developed to stand on its own.

Most art teachers believe that they have some obligation to teach art history as well as the usually-more-comfortable art studio lessons. All too often as soon as art history content enters the classroom student activity exits. Whereas artistic production is seen as a very active business, art history is seen as the passive business of transferring finite information from the lecturing teacher to the quietly listening student. The best teachers attempt to enliven their art history instruction through a variety of means. Some tie art history lessons to production classes, asking their students to produce a project in an historical style. Styles chosen for such projects are often those whose surface appearance is most easily mimicked, like pointillism, cubism, or pop art. Other teachers collect incidental information about artists' lives, information which can be used to "spice up" what is otherwise a pretty dry lecture. All too often well-meaning teachers conclude that their students just do not like art history and do not have sufficient interest in the subject for it to be "teachable" in their classrooms.

Let me propose that it is not so much the content of art history which is inappropriate for students in elementary and secondary schools, but that it is the method of teaching art history which is inappropriate. Our students are used to being active participants in artistic problem solving rather predictably rebel when required to regress to the level of passive recipients when art history instruction begins. Art history instruction can be just as active as artistic production can be. Just as students can learn to act as artists, they can also learn to act as art historians. Whereas art teachers have had considerable experience acting as artists, most have and no experience in the role of the art historian. They know a great number of facts about the history of art but usually do not know how those facts were established, what they mean, nor how to account for them. The methods of the art historian are as foreign and mysterious to the average art teacher as the methods of the artist are foreign to the non-artist.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE ART HISTORIAN

The art historian is not only a person who commands a massive array of individual facts about the history of art. He or she is a skilled professional. Like the artist, the art historian has mastered a discipline, a way of working which yields results. The products of the art historian are not such things as paintings, pots, and drawings, but rather such outcomes as insight, perspective, and synthesis. The artist works through a process to produce a product. So does the art historian. That process can be called art-historical inquiry.

The art-historical inquiry process can be seen in three categories: skills for establishing facts (including restoration, description, and attribution), skills for interpreting meaning, and skills for explaining change.

RESTORATION

If we want to understand something from another time we must see that something as it was at the time in question. Scientists do not reach their conclusions about how dinosaurs lived millions of years ago simply by looking at a lot of dinosaur bones. They use all the knowledge at their disposal to determine how those bones might have fit together and then how a living dinosaur of flesh as well as bone might have moved, eaten, struggled and died.

Like the scientist the art historian must know how the art work being examined looked in its original state. They must establish facts about the work's original appearance. Conservators work to preserve what remains of a work as well as they are able. In museums temperature and humidity, even light, are carefully monitored in order to preserve art works. Sometimes a work has so deteriorated that efforts are made to bring it back to its original condition (e.g. removing layers of accumulated varnish from a painting or cleaning the grime from a stained glass window). Sometimes very little remains of an art work. Then works may be reconstructed, (e.g. a missing wall of a medieval castle might be rebuilt, or the scattered parts of an altarpiece reassembled through photography or painting). More often the damaged or missing parts of an art work are reconstructed on paper, as drawings, or in the imagination, with the aid of verbal descriptions. If we are to see the great pyramids of Egypt as they looked 4000 years ago we must look at artists' renderings of their original appearance or imagine a layer of smooth stone restored to their great triangular planes and gleaming in the Egyptian sun.

DESCRIPTION

Once we are sure of what we are studying we can learn from that thing by looking at it carefully. Charles Darwin, sailing the world in the nineteenth century, was a person who looked carefully. His early training honed his skills of observation. Thus prepared, he noticed a small

difference in the coloration of finches from one island to the next in the Galapogas chain. This tiny observation, together with many others, caused him to wonder, and resulted in a new theory to explain change in nature.

Art historians record their careful observations as descriptions. Physical measurements are taken; subject matter is carefully inventoried; colors, shapes, lines, and other formal qualities are analyzed; materials and the evidence of technical forming processes are noted. Important works of the past (e.g. Michelangelo's Sistine ceiling frescoes or Rembrandt's major works) are studied again and again in order to discover some as-yet-unnoticed quality or detail which might shed light on the meaning or significance of those works.

ATTRIBUTION

Once we are sure of what we are examining and once we have scrutinized that thing very carefully, we may want to know some specific facts about the thing. If the object is human made we may want to know who made it. We may want to know where it came from and how old it is. We can use evidence found in the object itself and also evidence outside the object in order to help us establish this basic information. The age of North West Coast Indian totem poles can be determined to some extent by their size. It was only after the Indians of the North West were introduced to axes by nineteenth-century settlers that very large totem poles could be produced.

Art historians use a wide range of information as they determine basic facts about art works. Technical, social, political, and economic histories can each contribute to the discovery. Modigliani is said to have tossed some of his work in an Italian river in disgust. Recent dredging efforts yielded several heads attributed to the great sculptor. These attributions were shown to be mistaken when a couple of students produced photographs of those works in progress. The students had in fact pulled

off a very successful hoax. New facts are continually being established by art historians while accepted facts are always open to fresh study.

INTERPRETATION

Once we know some basic facts about something we can begin to ask what that something means, that is, what significance it has. We know that the Olympics were recently held in Los Angeles and we know that the Soviets did not attend. These are facts. One may ask further, what did the Soviet absence mean, for the Olympics, for ABC Sports, for American athletes, for Soviet athletes. Interpreting meaning requires a very different way of thinking from establishing facts. Meaning is not the same sort of thing as fact. Although any scholar would be prepared to support his or her interpretation of meaning with relevant facts, meaning can never be established for once and for all. The meaning of the Soviet absence matters more to top amateur athletes than it does to rural peasants in Central America who have no electricity. For the athletes, sporting activities are extremely important. They have chosen to devote a great proportion of their young lives to developing skill in sports. Central American rural peasants may spend even longer days in activities which require physical exertion but the motivation behind that exertion has to do with survival rather than competition and therefore the meaning of the exertion is different. For the peasant the whole idea of the millions spent in preparing for and staging the Olympic events might seem an obscene waste of money. Meaning has to do with human values and human values differ with time, place, and circumstances.

Art historians do not interpret the meaning of a work for everyone or even for themselves. They attempt to establish what an art work could have meant in its own time and culture. Art historians work with art made in cultures distant both in time and place. They must break away from the values of the here and now and begin to approach an art work as persons of its own context would have approached it. They must,

therefore, become intimately familiar with the values, mores, politics, art events, social life, economic structure and major events of the culture in which the work was produced. They are then prepared to begin to speculate about how the work might have been understood by its contemporaries.

Interpretations are never merely informed speculation. These "educated guesses" are taken as hypotheses which must be supported with facts and logical argument. The facts used as evidence to support interpretations can be both within the work and also outside the work. All the facts established through restoration, description and attribution as well as multitudinous facts about the culture and personal circumstances surrounding the production and reception of the art work are considered in a good historical interpretation. A good interpretation accounts for all the details in the work and makes sense within the context of that work. Even though major art works have been studied again and again, art historians continually re-examine traditional interpretations in light of new discoveries about the work itself or about its times. When Rembrant's Night Watch was cleaned and revealed to be a depiction of a daytime scene, many viewers were forced to reconsider their interpretations of the work. Because meaning is tied to human values and because human values continually shift, the meaning of art works is always open to a fresh look and perhaps a revised interpretation.

EXPLANATION

We may know a great deal about individual events and still not fully understand how they came to be. When we string together many individual events in the order of their occurrence we get a chronology but not an explanation. Events can be accounted for in at least two quite distinct ways. We can take the scientific approach which explains particular events by subsuming them under a general law. Or we can take the narrative approach and explain particular events by tying one to the next to the next to the next through a string of influences and effects.

Halley's comet made an appearance in 1910. This individual event can be explained by astronomers through appeal to scientific generalizations such as the laws of gravity and centrifugal force which affect bodies moving through space. During the Renaissance only a few particular notions about the Orient were available to scholars. A narrator might explain this fact by citing Renaissance scholars' dependence on the Tales of Marco Polo. Those tales can in turn be accounted for by the travels of a young thirteenth century Venetian. His travels can be accounted for by the fact that his father and uncle had made an earlier trip to the Orient and took him along on their second trip. The older Polos' travels might in turn be explained by the trading society of the city state of Venice and by a war which blocked them from returning directly from Constantinople on that earlier trip but instead forcing them east into the territory of Kublai Khan.

Art historians also use two methods of explanation. Erwin Panofsky is well known for his narrative accounts of themes through art. In Studies in Iconology (1939) Panofsky traces the changes and development of the image of Father Time from a Pompeian Mural of the first century A.D., through an eleventh century manuscript illumination, to a seventeenth century engraving called Time the Destroyer. To build this chain of influence Panofsky cites twenty-seven separate images of Father Time and shows how one influenced another.

Heinrich Wolfflin was another art historian interested in explaining change in art history. His method of explanation focuses on generalizations rather than on particulars. In Principles of Art History (1915), Wolfflin proposes that the development of styles in later western art can be explained by the generalization that styles alternate between classicism and romanticism. He defines the essential characteristics of these two styles and then categorizes specific paintings, drawings, sculpture, and architecture into those styles.

ART-HISTORICAL ANALYSIS
OF 20TH CENTURY SONG SHEET ILLUSTRATIONS

In order to be more confident of the art-historical inquiry process outlined on the preceding pages, the reader may want to practice that process on images which are not so distant in time and space as the examples cited. On the next five pages are questions relevant to each of the five inquiry phases described above. The questions are followed by samples of 20th century song sheet illustrations about which such queries might be made. The song sheets used in this presentation were acquired with funds from the Research Committee at Kutztown University or are from the collection of Eldon Katter.

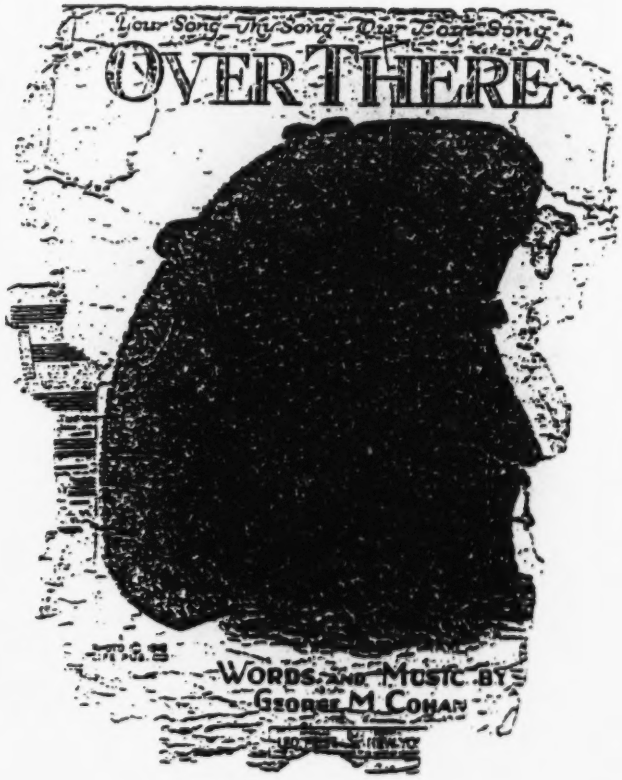
RESTORATION

Is the object in its original state?

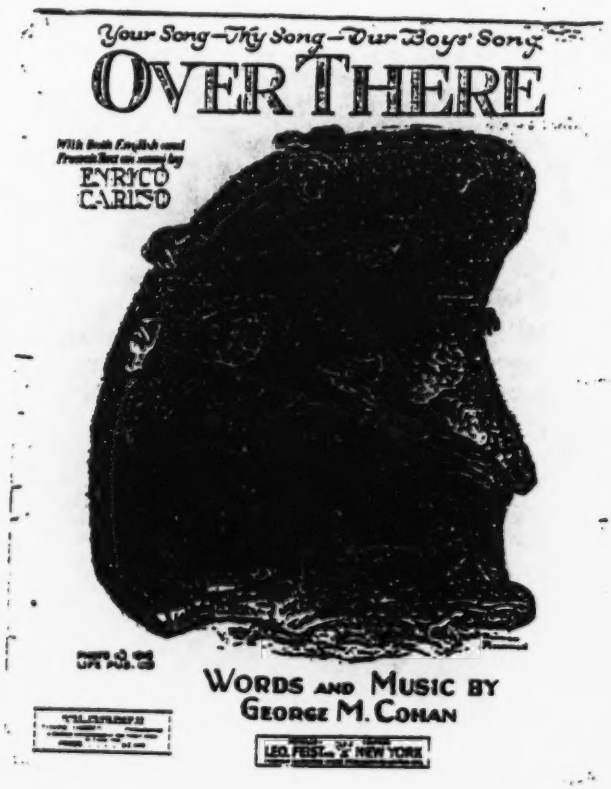
What must be done (or imagined) to restore the object to its original condition?

What must be done to preserve the artifact from further deterioration?

OVER THERE (1918)



OVER THERE (1918)



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DESCRIPTION

What can one observe about this object?

How big is it?

Through what process was it formed?

Are there details which might go unnoticed?

What are its visual qualities? (For example: color, pattern, degree of complexity)

THERE'S AN ANGEL MISSING FROM HEAVEN (1917)

COMIN' IN ON A WING AND A PRAYER (1943)

ATTRIBUTION
When was the object produced?
Who produced it?
Where was it produced?

AMERICA, HERE'S MY BOY (1917)

WEE, WEE, MARIE (1918)

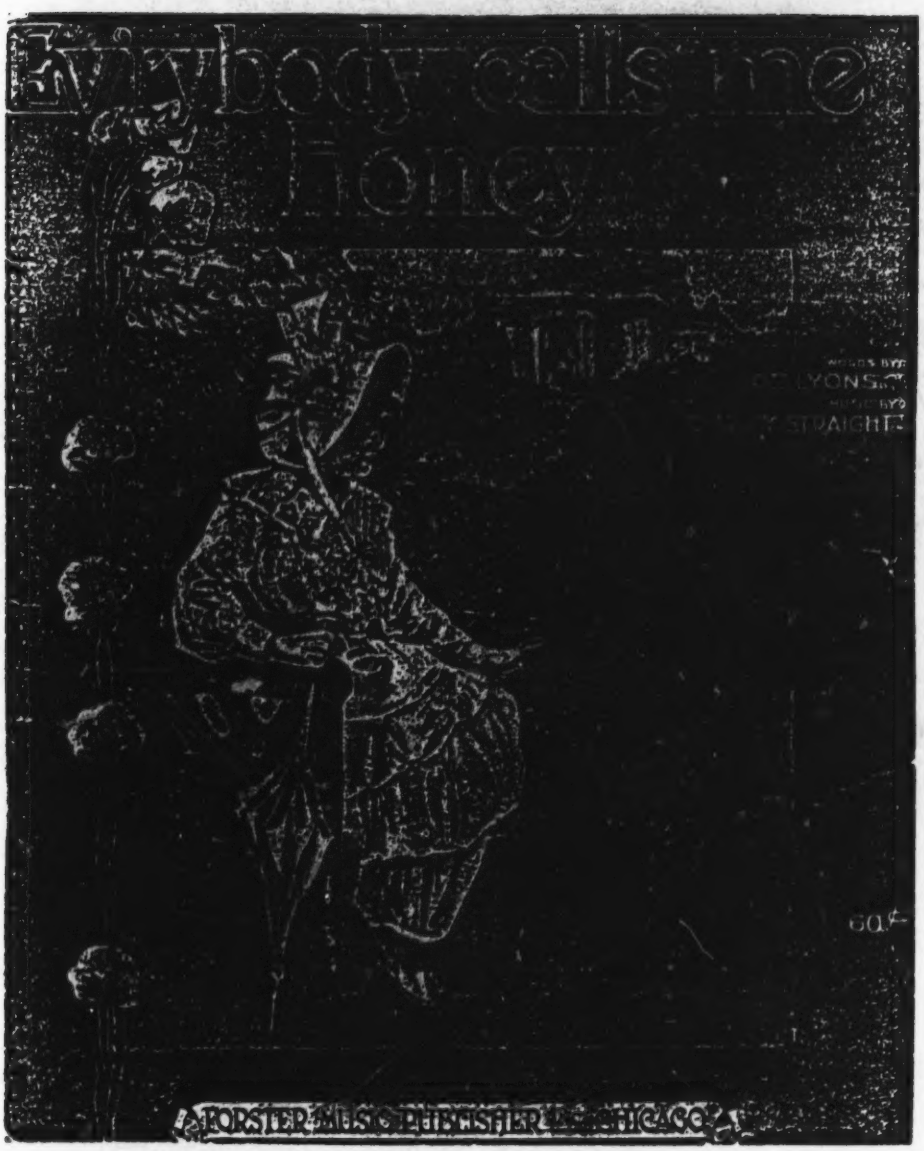
INTERPRETATION

What does it mean?

What could its producers have intended it to mean?

What did it mean to its contemporary perceivers?

EVERYBODY CALLS ME HONEY (1919)



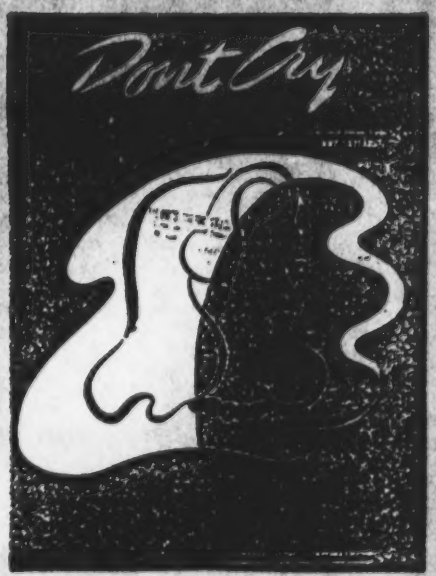
EXPLANATION

How can one account for changes which occur through time?

What particular event influenced another, which influenced another, which lead to another, which explains this change?

What laws or generalizations can be appealed to in order to explain (or predict) the change?

SONG SHEET ILLUSTRATIONS OF WOMEN'S HEADS 1900 - 1950



ART HISTORY AND PENNSYLVANIA'S QUALITY GOALS OF EDUCATION

The discipline of art history outlined above can assist in meeting at least ten of Pennsylvania's twelve Quality Goals. I shall cite relevant Learning Objectives listed for each of these goals. After each citation I shall identify attitudes, skills or knowledge objectives for learning art history which address the cited Learning Objective.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

1. Comprehension of oral, written, and nonverbal communication.

Students learn how to describe visual qualities through oral and written comunication.

Students learn how to find meaning in visual form.

2. Composition of oral and written communication.

Students learn how to organize their conclusions about an art work's meaning or place in time and to present those conclusions in oral or written form.

4. Comprehension and appreciation of ... arts.

Students learn to appreciate art works as aesthetic statements reflective of their times.

5. Use of information sources and research techniques.

Students learn how to find information about individual art works within the context of their times, how to verify the objectivity of their findings,

how to draw conclusions, and how to organize their conclusions into a report.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

5. Understanding and use of scientific methodology.

Students learn how to pose questions, seek data, confirm findings, formulate hypotheses, organize evidence, and draw conclusions.

CITIZENSHIP:

1. Knowledge of histories: local State, national and global.

Students learn that their visual environment is the product of years of conscious and unconscious aesthetic choices influenced by a multitude of other factors such as practicality, politics, personality, ethnic heritage, status and so forth.

4. Knowledge of individual rights and responsibilities.

Students learn to take responsibility for visual choices being made around them which can affect the aesthetic environment of the future.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES:

1. Comprehension of the principles and concepts in art ....

Students learn how to analyze art works in terms of formal elements (such as color, line, texture and shape) and principles (such as repetition, balance, gradation, contrast, variety and unity).

2. Understanding of the influence of literature, philosophy, and tradition in shaping our heritage.

Students learn that art works of the past were created out of the arts environment, value systems and expectations of their times.

3. Development of analytic ... skills in the arts and humanities.

Students learn how to identify the many distinct factors within (subject matter and formal qualities) and outside an art work (socio-economic situation, life style, politics, technology) which must be taken into consideration in an interpretation or explanation.

4. Application of objective and aesthetic criteria to decision-making.

Students learn how to support their interpretations and explanations with objective evidence in the work (including aesthetic qualities).

5. Particpation in intellectual and creative experiences in the arts and humanities.

Students learn to be confident in their own ability to invent hypotheses and to marshall argument and evidence to support those hypotheses.

ANALYTIC THINKING:

1. Development of information management skills.

Students learn how to select and find information which might shed light on the meaning of an art work within its cultural context.

2. Development of logical thinking skills.

Students learn how to form a logical argument to support their explanations of change in the visual appearance of object.

3. Development of problem solving skills.

Students learn how to ask questions, seek information, develop hypotheses, and draw conclusions about the meaning of art works or about change in our visual world.

FAMILY LIVING:

1. Development of personal and family relationships.

Students learn that an individual's interpretation of the significance of a thing can vary with factors such as age, cultural background, and values.

ENVIRONMENT:

1. Knowledge of natural and human resources.

Students learn to value their visual environment (including folk art and popular artifacts, architecture and landscape design) as a resource for present and future aesthetic enjoyment and cultural understanding.

2. Understanding of geographical environment: local, regional, global.

Students learn to appreciate the unique visual qualties of their local area and to appreciate the tremendous richness and variety of visual environments around the world (for example, costume, domestic architecture, and landscape architecture).

4. Development of personal environmental attitudes and values.

Students learn to take responsibilty for their changing visual environment.

SELF-ESTEEM:

2. Recognition of one's personal strengths and limitations.

Students learn that they are capable of finding meaning by themselves.

Students learn that they can judge the objectivity of their own conclusions.

3. Awareness of one's personal beliefs and opinions.

Students learn how to recognize their own contemporary beliefs and opinions about art in order to set them aside in the process of historical interpretation.

4. Development of self-confidence.

Students learn to be confident in their ability to draw original conclusions about visual objects.

5. Development of personal adaptability to change.

Students learn that their own attitudes, values and preferences may change in the future just as all these factors have changed continuously in the past.

UNDERSTANDING OTHERS:

1. Knowledge of cultural similarity and diversity.

Students learn that art works around the world vary so much, because of the variety of the cultures within which they were produced.

2. Knowledge of individual similarity and diversity.

Students learn that extremely different art works can be produced by different artists within a single society.

5. Knowledge of roles and contributions of racial and ethnic groups and women.

Students learn that women, Blacks, Hispanics and other ethnic groups have all produced significant art works.

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH SENIOR HIGH PROGRAMS IN ART HISTORY

KINDERGARTEN THROUGH PRIMARY GRADES

Art historians are used to looking at art works for extended periods of time and are capable of observing those works very carefully. Young children can be shown art works and directed in their attention of those works. By asking children to find and name all the subject matter in a painting we can develop familiarity with a number of major works. By asking students to point to various sensory qualities (line, shape, color, texture, etc.) we can extend children's capacity to attend to art works. By introducing a basic art vocabulary and providing children with opportunities to use that vocabulary through oral question and answer sessions, we increase children's ability to distinguish sensory differences and to articulate those distinctions.

INTERMEDIATE GRADES

Children can be introduced to the notion of visual change through time in the intermediate grades. They might also participate in basic fact gathering experiences. For example children might be asked to examine photographs of current fashions, fashions of the twenties and clothing worn in the nineteenth century. The question of which is oldest might then be posed. Once they have drawn their own conclusions, children could be asked to defend their decisions. Any dramatically-changed ordinary object might serve the same function, for example a log cabin, a Victorian frame house, and a modern development tract house.

The idea of passage of time can be made more real to children by relating the passage of time to family and friends. Children might be asked to select interesting old things in their home or neighborhood and then to interview their parents, older siblings, and neighbors to try to discover some facts about those objects. The teacher might prepare a

visual handout illustrating something as ordinary as automobiles, telephones, or ladies' hats as they have changed in appearance in the last fifty or one hundred years. Children could be asked to put these items in chronological order and give reasons for their decisions. Simple visual time lines of all sorts can be helpful at this age to make the passage of time more concrete for children.

MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH GRADES

Middle/junior high school children begin to reason abstractly and to understand differences in point of view. They can therefore begin to consider how the meaning of an art work might be different for people of another time or culture. Historical interpretation skills might be introduced at this age level. Major works from centuries ago or from distant cultures might be presented and interpreted in relationship to the values and events of their own time and culture. Questions might then be raised about how more contemporary art can be seen as reflecting modern times. Of course the careful description and formal analysis begun in elementary years would be continued and developed as the newer skills of historical interpretation are introduced.

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Senior high students are capable of understanding the complex process of art historical explanation. They can have accumulated some basic knowledge of stylistic development in western art through lessons in preceeding grades. High school students have also accumulated enough time in their own lives to begin to experience a sense of history, or at least change. Popular arts, fashion, and consumer items change quickly enough for students to at least be able to recognize "outdatedness" and "old fashionesness." They might be asked to describe changes in the appearance of, shall we say, shoes or album covers over a ten year period. Longer periods might be considered especially if small groups build a visual chronology through collecting and library research. The advertisements in old magazines, such as National Geographic are

marvelous resources. Once again parents and older friends and relatives can be excellent "witnesses" to fashion trends of the last fifty years. Old family wedding photographs can be used as documents bearing witness to visual change.

Once a chronology has been built and described one can raise the issue of explanation. Accounting for visual change might make use of history and social studies classes outside the art curriculum. Visual time lines of important works in the history of art continue to be valuable tools for understanding interrelationships among styles and cultures.

ART HISTORY AND OTHER DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE ART CURRICULUM

I shall not attempt to spell out all the ways that art history instruction can be implemented at various grade levels. Art history can be presented separately from studio, criticism and other curriculum areas. Or disciplines can be interrelated in a complementary program. Below the reader will find some discussion of how art history can operate to complement other curriculum areas.

ART CRITICISM

When interpretation is considered in the art curriculum it is usually thought of as part of the process of art criticism. Historical interpretation is quite similar to interpretation in criticism except for its greater concern for understanding the meaning of a work within the context of its time and culture. Art historians, like critics, must be skilled in description and formal analysis, although some art historians focus more on subject matter (iconographers) and others more on formal qualities as they reach their interpretive conclusions. Art history, unlike criticism, does not require a judgment of worth. Such a non-evaluative

scholarly process can be valuable in the study of controversial or unfamiliar works which students might otherwise dismiss out of hand.

ARTISTIC PRODUCTION

Students might become more reflective, more conscious of their aesthetic choices, if, when finished with a major work, they reconstructed a chronology of the development of their work. They might consider whence came their ideas, how those ideas were influenced or changed as the work progressed, what technical and aesthetic choices were made as the piece developed, and how they came to judge that the work was complete. On a larger scale students might gain some distance on their work if they were given the challenge of studying historically their own (or a classmate's) accumulated work over a semester, a year or even a lifetime, noting trends, influences, continuities and changes over time.

AESTHETICS

Any study of art history raises, at least indirectly, the major issues of "What is art? and "What is good art?" When much of what we now call art was produced, the concept of a special class of objects called "art" was not known. Many tools, musical instruments, liturgical objects, even gods are today considered art works. The inclusion of coffee makers, cars and other consumer goods in the collections of contemporary art museums likewise raises the question "What is art?" Art works highly prized by art experts of one era (e.g. Pre-Raphaelites) have been dismissed by the experts of another. Such situations raise the perennial question "What is good art?"

CONSUMERISM

Understanding the varying tastes and fashions of visual history can raise the consciousness of young people about the fashions of today. Studying consumer products and art works from another age is a process through which students can learn to consider transient vs long-enduring values.

Such a study might yield perspective about and understanding of the objects with which we choose to surround ourselves.

HUMANITIES

When information about a culture is used to help understand art works, the study is called art history. When the process if reversed and art works are used to help us understand a culture, the study is called humanities or social studies. Art works manifest, reveal, sometimes even proffer human values. A culture is not fully understood without an understanding of its art. Art is not fully understood without an understanding of its position within the culture which produced it. In some ancient civilizations (e.g. Sumer and ancient Crete) what we know of those civilizations is derived largely from the artifacts, buildings and other objects now considered "art." The humanities and art history can therefore be complementary disciplines within the curriculum.

CONCLUSION

The proposals which I have just set forth are not easily put into practice. We in higher education must do our part to support the process of curriculum reform and materials development. The Pennsylvania Department of Education and Intermediate Units can also provide support. The State Board of Education has taken an important step by mandating Arts and Humanities learning in its Chapter 5 Curriculum Regulations. In the end, teaching art history will become a reality only if individual art teachers and groups of teachers are willing to commit considerable time and effort to curriculum and resource development and in-service experimentation. The mandate has been given and the time to begin is now.

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Criticism

The Study of Art Criticism in the Classroom
(A paper to be presented at the 1984 Kutztown Art Conference, October 26, 1984)

Evan J. Kern

Part I

Picture Study Revisted

I am an inveterate reader of newspaper column fillers--you know, those odd bits and pieces of information the editors use to fill in columns when the articles are too short. One column filler that particularly caught my attention was the most succinct theory of education I have ever read. It appeared in some forgotten issue of the Reading Times and went as follows:

> Yaks are driven in the Himalayas without harness or reins. They are steered to the right and left by throwing rocks.[1]

I am here today to throw rocks! My charge, as I understand it, is to persuade you that the study of art criticism in the classroom is of primary importance in the general education of our students. I also am to discuss the relationships of the study of art criticism to the newly revised curriculum regulations and to the emphasis in some sectors of our profession on an approach to the teaching of art known as "discipline-based art education."

Since my views on the study of art criticism have been given in a number of different forums and, thus, are familiar to many of you, I thought it would be instructive to approach the topic from a different perspective in order to demonstrate the importance of the study of art criticism in the classroom.

The philosopher George Santayana in his book Reason in Commonsense observes that "those who cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it." Although this caveat was disputed by another sage who noted that "history never repeats itself", it is well to have some knowledge of our historical antecedents in order to avoid repeating errors similar to those made by our predecessors. With this in mind, I want to take a few minutes to talk about the history of art education as it relates to the study of art criticism in the classroom. In the process, we may become acquainted with some other theories of education besides that of throwing rocks.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century there were two distinct subjects taught in art. These were (1) drawing and (2) picture study. The primary aim for the teaching of drawing was vocational, that is, the training of artisans for industry. We find references to this purpose for drawing as late as 1926 in, for example, a course of study published by the Mississippi State Department of Education.

> Drawing as a course of study in school, falls far short of its real value if it is made an end rather than a

> means. Taught as an end, it functions in the development of artists. Taught as a means, it functions in the development of artisans. Of artists there are comparatively few, . . . On the other hand, there are artisans without number, and the demand for intelligent, skilled artisans is unlimited.[2]

In discussing the method by which drawing should be taught a Teachers' Manual published in 1905 by the Washington State Department of Education claims that:

> The most effective means of teaching drawing . . . is by example. The teacher must lead, not push; must draw, not talk; show how by doing, not explaining. How does a boy learn to swim? (1) He sees other boys swim. (2) He wants to swim. (3) He tries and swims. It is the same with flying kites, playing marbles, jumping the rope, riding a bicycle, etc. They see; they have the desire, they learn. Your pupils will learn drawing precisely the same way if they have the opportunity.[3]

The theory of education operant here is that of the child as a "minature adult" or the child as an "empty vessel," to be filled by the teacher, of course.

The picture study movement began as an academic supplement to the teaching of drawing with its vocational objectives. The essential aim of picture study was the development of taste and the appreciation for good design. The earliest reference I have read is found in a Syllabus of Form, Drawing and Color Study published by the Maine Department of Education in 1895. It reads as follows:

> Encourage children to study good pictures, to discover what they represent, and to express reasons for liking them.[4]

By the second decade of the Twentieth Century Picture Study was firmly established in the schools. An outline for its study is found in a Course of Study for the Elementary Schools of South Dakota published by the South Dakota Department of Public Instruction in 1917. The outline prescribes for grade 1, 2, and 3 the "observation and study of the picture."[5] (Five pictures were to be selected for study by each grade each year.) Pictures to be studied at these grade levels include "The First Step" by Millet, "Infant Samuel" by Reynolds, "Squirrels" by Lansier, "Pilgrims Going to Church" by Boughton, "The Gleaners" by Millet, "St. John and the Lamb" by Murillo, "Sistine Madonna" by Raphael, and "At the Watering Trough" by Vonveret.

For grades 4, 5, and 6 the students, in addition to looking at the pictures and learning the story associated with each, were also to "become familiar with the history of the painter and work."[6] Pictures to study at these grade levels include: "Christ in the Temple" by Hoffman, "Return of the Mayflower" by Boughton, "Monarch of the Glen" by Bonhuer, "The Balloon" by Dupre, "Sir Gallahad" by Watts, Hiawatha" by Norris, and "Washington Crossing the Delaware" by Leutze.

During grades 7 and 8 students were to "Recognize and observe theme, (religious, dignity of labor, etc.) work should also concern appreciation, principles of balance, rhythm and color. Name of picture. Name of artists. Composition. Where is it now?"[7] Pictures listed for study for grades 7 and 8 included "End of Day" by Adam, "Joan of Arc" by Le Page, "Song of the Lark" by Breton, "Stag at Bay" by Landseer, "Statue of Lincoln by St. Gaudens, "The Fighting Temeraire" by Turner, and the "Virgin and Child" by Botticelli.

According to another course of study, this one published by the Wyoming Department of Education in 1931 the aims of picture study were:

1. Create desire for good pictures.
2. To become familiar with some of the most famous pictures and artists.
3. To instill in children a love and appreciation for beautiful works of art.[8]

The types of pictures to be chosen for study were:

1. Those that are attractive because of some beautiful scene they portray.
2. The "story telling" type, in which some story or plot is very evident at a glance.
3. Pictures that contain the germ of an inspiring thought or sentiment.[9]

The actual steps in presenting a picture study were identified in the same course of study and were as follows:

1. Choose picture and artist (Give brief sketch of artists' life).
2. Tell the reason for the artist painting the picture.
3. Present picture saying "I have a picture painted by _____."
4. Show the picture and ask the following questions:
   a. What time of year is represented? Why?
   b. What time of day? Why?
   c. Ask pupils to point out the most interesting thing in the picture.
   d. What might be a name for the picture? (Hint given in artist's life.)
   e. Teacher tells the real name and writes name of artist and picture on board.
   f. Who can tell the story the picture tells?

5. Have pupils go to their seats, paste in the small picture, write name of picture and artist and the story the picture tells?

6. Review by holding up pictures and have pupils tell name of picture and artist.[10]

I have at hand an actual print, "The Balloon" by Julien Dupre. It was taken from the "Instructor Picture Studies--Group One" portfolio published by the F. A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, New York. I have made photo copies of the small sepia prints that accompanied it so that each of you could have one of your own--just as in a real picture study class.

I think it would be instructive for me to read the materials accompanying this picture.

From a Tintex Print, Copyright Detroit Publishing Company

THE BALLOON—*By Julien Dupre*

The Balloon

The French artist, Julien Dupre, has painted a picture of some peasants of long ago, who are gazing at a balloon. In those days, especially away off in the country, a big balloon in the air was a rare sight to behold.

See the erect position of the girl in the center of the group. Notice that the woman on the right and the man on the left are bending toward the girl in the center. The slant of their bodies helps to keep the group together as a unit. These peasants have stopped work and are intently watching the progress of the balloon. The women are still holding their rakes in their hands, though their thoughts are on the balloon and its passengers. We can imagine what the little boy must be saying and how excited he must be.

In the background we see a shining stream, a fence, tall trees, and rolling hills. The farm looks prosperous and well kept. We can believe that for generations this French family has worked very hard to till its land.

After you have studied this picture you will find yourself thinking more about the French peasants and their habits than about the balloon itself. Do you believe that the artist intended that you should do this? I am sure that he did. The original of this painting hangs in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

Questions to Answer

What are these people doing? Where is the balloon in the picture? Do you think that these people have seen many balloons? Why?

Have you ever seen a balloon? How does it stay up in the air? How do people ride in balloons? Do you think that you would like to ride in one?

Where do you think that these people are? Are they Americans? Why do you not think so? Is there a child in the picture? What do you imagine that he is saying?

What else do you see besides the people and the balloon? Can you find a stream and a fence? Where are they?

What is the name of this painting? Do you think that it is a good name? Who painted this picture? Where can you see the original painting?

Helpful Material for the Teacher

Julien Dupre was born in Paris in 1851, and received his art education in that city, studying under Pils and Henri Lehmann. He won several honors at expositions and in art contests. His work is of high merit and contains both interest and fine artistic feeling. Very early in his career he was attracted to French peasant life, and practically all of his paintings are based on this subject. He is known for his portrayal of farm animals and landscapes.

His painting, "The Balloon," is very unusual in that all of the figures are turned away from the observer. Dupre has taken advantage of this idea to obtain a striking composition. Children will especially like this picture because it is certain to attract and hold their attention. Everything looks or points to one thing--the balloon. This is the center of interest.

Every good picture contains a center of interest. If it did not, the observer's gaze would go from one spot to another, because it would have no definite goal. The object which is to be the center of interest does not need to be a very large one, as is evidenced by this picture. The balloon is one of the smallest spots found in the painting, yet the gaze of the peasants makes us look at it.

Although we are attracted to the balloon because of the artist's composition, our eyes come back to the peasants, and we find ourselves studying them and becoming interested in what they are doing and thinking. This is exactly what Dupre intended that we should do. His message was to create interest and love for the French peasant folk by painting them in their various moods.

Compare this picture by Dupre with Lerolle's "By the River." See how many more curved and broken lines "The Balloon" contains. They help to arouse excitement and interest in the mind of the observer. Close one eye and view the picture through a tube of paper used like a telescope. This will aid considerably in obtaining the effect of sunlight and atmosphere, which is so prominent in the original painting, and will also sharpen the values.

> This painting is decidedly a story-picture. It would require but little effort to locate interesting material on balloons and their development. The children could be asked to bring pictures of dirigibles or airplanes to school for a blackboard group. Some of the pupils may have toy airplanes, and magazines often contain suggestions for making paper airplanes. The subject of modes of travel could be added. Many very interesting travel pages could be assembled into a most entertaining and educative group.[11]

(Incidentally, this painting no longer is in the Metropolitan Museum. Instead, it is on display in the Reading Museum having been purchased by the museum for $3,000.00 in 1938. I am sure that a number of you have seen it there.)

I hope in my reading of the materials accompanying this picture that you noticed the subtle emphasis upon mor aspects "the farm looks prosperous and well kept," "his (Dupre's) message was to create interest and love for the French peasant folk."[12] Picture study frequently was seen to be a means for moral training and, as such, reached a peak in 1927 when the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction published a course in picture study. The purpose of this course was:

> Character Building thru picture study obtained by:
>
> (a) Knowledge of some of the great pictures of the world and the ideals of the artists who created them.
> (b) Appreciation of color, form and composition.
> (c) Love of truth and beauty developed through study of God's handiwork in nature and achievements of man.[13]

In this course the pictures selected for study were chosen because they were thought to exemplify a code of morals for children. This code of morals was developed by Dr. W. J. Hutchinson, President of Berea College in Kentucky, and presented in the form of "Ten Moral Laws" A key word representing the spirit of each law was chosen for study for each month of the school year as follows:

> September--Work
> October--Hope
> November--Gratitude
> December--Kindness
> January--Thrift
> February--Respect
> March--Courage
> April--Purity
> May--Duty[14]

Finally, a picture was selected for each month for each grade which presented opportunities for teaching the attributes of character encompassed by the ten laws.

Like you, I chuckled when I read this course of study. From a perspective of over fifty years it seems quaint and naive. We know better, we know that the process of character building is quite complex and extends far beyond the school classroom. We should remember, though, that these were serious educators--like you and I--and they firmly believed they could mold the character of students through picture study.

The Picture Study Movement as a force in art education gradually lost its dominance and the last reference to it that I have been able to locate was in a Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools published by the North Carolina State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1947. It notes:

> "The State art bulletin gives a list of prints and where to get them . . . .From this list of seventy-two prints for the primary grades and sixty-seven for the intermediate, the principals and teachers will be able to make the selection for the purchase of ten prints per grade as the minimum for accrediment of an elementary school, . . ."[15]

In other words, the North Carolina elementary and intermediate schools were required to purchase these prints in order to obtain and maintain there accreditation. Nor were the secondary schools forgotten. They were "referred to the list of sixty-seven in the elementary list plus the twenty-four given as types of prints for secondary school use."[16]

In the list of prints given in this Handbook it was interesting to note many of the same pictures as those named thirty years earlier in the South Dakota Course of Study. There was Boughton's "Pilgrims Going to Church", Millet's "Feeding her Birds", and Raphael's "Sistine Madonna", among others. There were some newcomers as well including Picasso's "Mother and Child", Van Gogh's "Cornfield in Provence" and Grant Wood's "American Gothic."

The picture study movement and the "empty vessel" theory of education ultimately ran their course so that by the middle of this century they no longer played an important part in the art education scene. In their stead came the "child-centered curriculum", progressive education, and the teaching of art for creative expression. The child and the child's work were paramount. The child knew best what he or she needed to learn. It was the teachers' task to assist but never to direct the child in this learning process. We find this point of view clearly expressed in a Handbook on the Improvement of Instruction published by the Louisiana Department of Public Instruction in 1938 wherein it is noted that:

> The school should provide opportunity for creative expression for all children. The practice of predetermining what should be taught should be cast aside for

> a plan that accepts the individual as he is and assists him in the development of the particular problems, which are of most concern to him.[17]

By the mid-nineteen fifties the emphasis on creative expression had become so pervasive that frequently there is no mention of art appreciation, great works of art, or artists. It is almost as if the world of art did not exist. This point of view is underscored by the following:

> When teachers and administrators provide varied art experience for children, they indicate their awareness of the innate need for creative expression of ideas, feelings and moods. In turn, children who have discovered their world and the world about them, who have explored materials, tools and processes, and who have designed visual expressions, begin to see their relationship to the people, places and things in their world. The creative process leads to the development of sensitivity, tolerance, and understanding among children. When children participate in an educationally sound art program . . . they satisfy a basic need--that of dynamic creativity.[18]

We can characterize the teaching of art for creative expression movement as the "art is caught not taught" theory of education. The child not the discipline is the focus of instruction leading to that often repeated phrase voiced by art teachers that "I teach children not art." But just as the concept of the student as an empty vessel ran its course in education, so, too, has the "art is caught not taught" concept of education. In its place there has been emerging of late a growing concern for the teaching of aesthetics, art history and art criticism in addition to the making of art. Even the character of studio art is changing from one of freedom of expression to one in which the emphasis is upon learning the concepts, skills, and technics used by professional artists. In other words, there is a growing concern for the teaching of art as an organized body of knowledge, process, objects, and events. We can call it the "art as a discipline" movement.

This increased concern for the teaching of art as a discipline appears very noticably in curriculum guides and curriculum regulations published by State Departments of Education throughout the nation. For example in a booklet titled A Pattern for Art--K-12 published in 1981 by the Oregon Department of Education the following major objectives for art education are found.

> Students will be able to describe subjects and themes depicted in a variety of works of art.
>
> Students will be able to analyze art in terms of historical and contemporary points of view.
>
> Students will know various criteria for evaluating art, and be able to write evaluations of works of art using such

criteria.

Students will be able to identify how major schools of thought in art influence artistic expression.[19]

For the Georgia Department of Education the five goals for art education are:

1. Develop perceptual awareness.
2. Value art as an important realm of human experience.
3. Know about art history and its relationship to other disciplines.
4. Make and justify judgments concerning aesthetic quality and merit of works of art.
5. Produce works of art.[20]

And, right here at home, the newly revised curriculum regulations published by the Pennsylvania Board of Education require the following objectives be attended to under the Arts and Humanities goal for Quality Education:

(i) Comprehension of principles and concepts in art, music, craftsmanship, other discrete arts, and the humanities.
(ii) Understanding of the influence of literature, philosophy, and tradition in shaping our heritage.
(iii) Development of analytic and performing skills in the arts and the humanities.
(iv) Application of objective and aesthetic criteria to decision-making.
(v) Participation in intellectual and creative experiences in the arts and humanities.[21]

For many of us, trained as we have been in the teaching of art for creativity and self-expression, the transition from the "art is caught not taught" to the "art as a discipline" concept of art education will be both painful and difficult. Painful because it challenges many of the values we hold for the teaching of art. Difficult because few of us have had any formal instruction in art criticism, aesthetics, and art historical inquiry.

Admittedly, we all operate from some theory of art, but how many of us can differentiate between the Mechanist, Contextualist, Organicist and Formist theories of art propounded by Stephen Pepper and, more importantly, use these theories to expand our students' understanding of art and the role it plays in human experience?

Of course we all know art history--you know, the darkened classroom, the slides, artists, art movements, names and dates of works of art, but how many of us know what an art historian does as an art historian and not as a teacher of art history? Can you translate what an art historian does as an art historian into classroom activities which lead to students acquiring a better understanding of the roots of art?

As for art criticism--thats those "crits" we hold at intervals with students as they work on or complete their studio projects. Well, thats a form of criticism but that is not what professional art critics do. The art critic plays an important role in shaping the world of art and knowing the process of art criticism can be a powerful tool for those who seek to better understand art. Should not we provide our students with such a tool?

My remarks up to this point have been intended to persuade you to give some serious thought to the teaching of art as a discipline for unless we want to be anachronisms in art education it will be necessary for us to adopt a more positive attitude toward the integration of aesthetics, art history; and art criticism with our studio practices in the art classroom. With these prefactory remarks I would like now to turn attention to the study of art criticism in the classroom.

Part II

The Study of Art Criticism in the Classroom

Three major requirements must be met in developing curriculum for the study of art criticism. First, there must be available a method of art criticism that can be taught and learned. The teacher must be skilled at doing art criticism, and the students must learn the skills of art criticism. Second, there must be available to the teacher and students works of art or reproductions of works of art as objects to be criticized. Third, there must be a sound, educational reason for the study of art criticism in order to focus the learning activities. Although it is usual in discussion of curriculum matters to begin with the objectives, I am going to reverse this usual order and, instead, talk first about methods of art criticism.

It has been observed that every theory of art contains within the theory a method of art criticism. This implies, then, that if you are a contextualist you would use one method of criticism and if you were a formist you would use a different method of criticism. As a contextualist your method of criticism would reflect your concern for the quality of the art experience.

> The more vivid the experience and the more extensive and rich its quality, the greater its aesthetic value . . . . Value lies in the situation as a whole (hence the term 'contextualism') and the aesthetic value lies in the intensity and extensity of its quality. [22]

As a contextualist art critic you would direct the viewer's attention to those aspects of a work of art which add to the richness or detract from the richness of the experience with the work of art.

As a formist your method of criticism would reflect your concern with the

universal and the norm.

> The . . . Formist stress the fact of the normal, seeks to isolate it, and to define values in terms of it . . . . for the formist aesthetic value is found in (1) the ideal representation of the norm (the Greek Venus); (2) conformity to the norm; and (3) conformity to or expression of a culture.
>
> For the formist "Art represents and gives expression to the natural norm (and consequently gives) satisfaction to the normal man.
>
> A formist critic who is searching for the universal in art and for the norm will be only superficially interested in the particulars . . . for him art criticism comes very close to ethical judgment.[23]

Thus we can see that your point of view about the nature of art, your theory of art, will be reflected in the way you approach the process of art criticism. As a contextualist you are concerned with how the parts go together to provide an intense, aesthetically rewarding experience, and consequently you direct attention in your criticism to the parts and the way the parts fund the whole of the experience. As a formist your concern is not with the experience at all, but, rather, with the way the whole reflects or fails to reflect the ideal.

By now you can probably see some educational potential in deliberately selecting different theories of art as bases for art criticism. Students would begin to understand how theories of art serve to illuminate and explain our experiences with works of art and, as a consequence, arrive at a fuller understanding of the nature of art and its role in human affairs.

Different theories of art usually have their roots in different cultures or in different periods of time. Today, the contextualist theory with its concern for the quality of the art experience seems most appropriate for explaining contemporary art and our experiences with such art. Therefore, I would like to spend some time discussing a contextualist method of art criticism. In doing so I may "reinvent the wheel" for I am going to assume that none of you have a very thorough knowledge of contextualist art criticism. For some of you this will be true. For those of you who are knowledgeable, perhaps you will be able to discover some new insights in my remarks.

When we view an unfamiliar work of art, particularly a contemporary, non-objective work of art filled with slashing, dripping, splashes of color we may wonder what all those slashings, drippings, and splashings mean. What is the purpose of such works of art? Are they good works of art? What are we, as viewers, suppose to see?

Lacking an understanding of such a work of art, an untrained individual is likely to dismiss it and other works like it as unworthy of his or her attention--as meaningless. Yet it seems reasonable to believe that not all

such works are meaningless, that not all contemporary artists are charlatans foisting frauds on a gullible public. Much art, especially that of the twentieth century, presents the untrained viewer with a seemingly confused and undifferentiated mass of images and forms. All too frequently, when confronted with such works of art, the untrained viewer's first inclination is, perhaps, to place the blame on the ineptitude of the artist, on the over-enthusiasm of a press agent, or, on "modern art," rather than on his or her own inability to critically see, understand, and appraise such works of art.

It is unnecessary, though, to remain uninformed about the meaning of a work of art. Through the method of art criticism we can learn to direct our attention to the important parts of a work of art, to interpret what these parts, taken as a whole mean, and to evaluate our experience with the work.

Art criticism can provide answers to the questions "What does the work of art mean?" and "Is it a good work of art?" Art criticism tells us what to look for and how to evaluate what we discover in the work of art. That is, it is the function of art criticism to help clarify the meaning of the work of art and to lead us to an understanding of the importance of the particular work. Using a descriptive method, art criticism puts into words the important aspects of the experience with the work of art. It guides our perception, directing us to look at qualities and relationships presented by the work of art. Through art criticism we can build a set of perceptions which allow us to see as the critic sees and understand what the critic understands. If we ourselves act as critics, then we guide the development of our own perceptions and, consequently, come to our own understanding and appreciation of the work of art.

The following method of criticism described is based on the contextualist assumption that for the viewer the most significant art experience is aesthetic experience. (An aesthetic experience is an intrinsic experience, an experience which is valued for the simple pleasure of that experience, an experience valued for itself. When you watch a sunset, listen to music, savor the flavor and texture of a ripe apple with no other purpose in mind than the pleasures to be derived from the experience, you are engaged in an aesthetic experience. When you enjoy the complexities of line, subtlety of color, quality of space in a work of art, when you get caught up in the changing character of optical illusions, then you are engaged in an aesthetic experience. Any experience which is directed inward, which holds the experience as its sole reward is an aesthetic experience.)

There are three processes or steps involved in art criticism, steps which are directed toward enabling us to understand and appreciate a work of art. These three steps are: (1) description, (2) interpretation, and (3) evaluation. The purpose of the first step, description is to cause us to attend to the various qualities presented by the work of art. The inventory of qualities of the work of art produced as a result of the description provides the raw data for the second step in art criticism--interpretation. Interpretation involves a kind of detective work whereby the various bits of description are fitted together in determining the meaning of the work of art. The purpose of

the final step in art criticism, evaluation, is to judge the significance of this meaning to our experience with the work of art. Evaluation serves to bring closure, that is, to bring a particular art experience to an end.

Description provides the foundation for criticizing art. The function of description is to direct our attention to those qualities which taken as a whole determine the meaning of the work of art. With a full description of such qualities we should be able to discover what the work of art expresses, its meaning, and significance. Without an adequate description both our interpretation and evaluation may be in error. Consequently, description is the first step in art criticism.

It is important that the description accurately reflect our experiences with the work of art. A description which fails to report all of the important qualities perceived in the work of art, or one which reports information not actually contained in the work of art cannot be expected to lead to successful interpretation or evaluation. An accurate description means the use of descriptive statements as substitutes for our perceptual experiences with the work of art. We must select carefully the words we use in such descriptive statements. The words should capture the essential nature of the specific qualities we see and experience in the work of art. If we see a certain color--red, for example--the word "red" may only give a partial description of what we have perceived. The pharases "fiery red" or "blood red" may be more accurate descriptions of the particular color quality.

For the beginner in art criticism descriptions of works of art should be written, or, if within the structure of a group or class, presented orally. These physical acts of description serve to focus the viewer's attention on the aesthetic qualities presented by the work of art. When written, description also provides a record to which one can refer at later stages in the criticism. The ultimate criterion for description is how well the description represents the work of art. An incomplete or inadequate description will prevent the viewer from carrying out a successful interpretation and evaluation and, more importantly, from arriving at a full understanding of the work of art.

The second step in art criticism is interpretation. The purpose of interpretation is to determine the meaning of the work of art. The description of the work of art provides an inventory of the work's aesthetic qualities. The process of interpretation entails using this descriptive inventory as a basis from which the meaning is determined.

To describe a particular painting as containing certain specific colors, shapes, symbols, images, and employing a certain structural balance--identifying aesthetic qualities--identifies that through which the painting is capable of expressing meaning. However, this is not the same as stating that the particular painting has a specific meaning. Rather, it is the combination of this description with factors external to the painting that determine its meaning. Such external factors are those which influence the meaning of the work of art through either (1) the cultural context of the work itself or (2) the cultural context of the viewer.

Every work of art is produced by an artist who is a member of a particular society, living in a particular time and place. This is the cultural context of the work of art. These circumstances of time, place, and society exert a great influence on the artist and, consequently, on the form of the works of art he produces. Such factors as tradition, moral codes, technology, and concepts of man, nature, God, and art, all in one way or another impinge on the artist and are reflected in his works of art. Some cultures develop unique art forms, the pyramids of Egypt, the temples of Greece, the mosaics of Byzantium. In addition to its unique art forms a culture also may employ unique symbols and signs in its works of art. Thus both the form and content of the work of art is conditioned by its cultural context, so much so that an understanding of its meaning may depend quite heavily on a knowledge of this cultural context.

Just as the work of art has its cultural context, so too has the viewer. Because each of us is born into and lives in a particular culture, we acquire certain attitudes and ideas about art. We hold certain values that may be unique to our culture. Even our way of looking at the world may be determined culturally. As an example, for most of us a black and white photograph can be translated easily into images of people, automobiles, houses, or whatever the photograph is concerned with. As children we grow up with black and white pictorial images. Persons in some less technical cultures which lack photography and the printed page, when shown a black and white photograph, are unable to interpret the photograph as being an image even if that image happens to be a photograph of themselves.

There are numerous other ways in which our cultural context conditions our perceptions of a work of art and, as a result, our understanding of the work. If, for example, we think of art as being the representation of a physical reality then non-objective paintings would be rejected as "non-art." Similarly, if we believe that art is primarily a matter of achieving certain formal relationships between color, line, shape, and texture we are apt to dismiss any narrative or reportorial quality of the work of art as irrelevant. Such concepts effectively limit our experience and understanding of works of art.

The influence of the cultural context on our understanding of the work of art becomes evident during the interpretation stage of criticism. The viewer uses the aesthetic qualities revealed by the descriptive inventory as clues for interpretation. The aesthetic qualities in the work are culturally determined, that is, they are created by an artist and reflect his and his society's ideas, attitudes, and values. On the other hand, the meanings attached to these aesthetic qualities depend in large measure on the viewer's particular set of ideas, attitudes, and values. Consequently, the closer the cultural context of the work of art is to the cultural context of the viewer the greater the likelihood of the viewer understanding the work of art. Conversely, the further apart the cultural contexts of the viewer and the work of art, the greater the potential for misunderstanding.

The process of interpretation consists of analyzing the information provided by the description--the aesthetic qualities--for their potential meaning. If the

work of art has been adequately described then we should be able to examine that description and determine the meaning of the work of art. As a matter of fact, if we attend to the task of description with sufficient detail the meaning of the work of art usually will become apparent.

There are times, however, when even the best descriptions do not provide sufficient information for determining the meaning of the work of art. This is especially the case when the work is a product of a different culture or period in time. When we are unable to determine the meaning of a work of art from the descriptive inventory it becomes necessary to bring in information from outside the work of art. Such information should help to determine the identity of a particular image or group of images, the meanings of a symbol, sign or groups of symbols or signs.

The source of such outside information is, of course, the cultural context of the work of art. Reference to the life and times of the artist, similar works by the same or different artists, even the title of the painting may be found useful in determining the meaning of the work of art. Care must be exercised in the use of outside information so that it does not overshadow the experience of the work of art and so stand in place of that experience. For example, were we to discover that a particular artist, say Braque, experimented with cubism then we might dismiss a Braque painting simply as "cubistic" without ever coming to grips with the "cubistic" meaning of the work of art. We need to explore beyond the conceptual recognition of a painting executed in a certain style--cubism--to what that particular work means. Therefore, when we do admit outside information as an aid in determining the meaning of a work of art, we should do so only when that information enhances or makes more meaningful those qualities already present in the work of art. Interpretation, then, built on an analysis of the descriptive inventory of aesthetic qualities in a work of art, attempts to determine the meaning or the work. If the interpretation of the work of art seems appropriate then the next step in criticism is evaluation.

From the contextualist's point of view, in a sense, once the meaning of a work of art has been determined it is also evaluated, for the value of the work is its meaning and, conversely, its meaning is its value. The quality of our aesthetic response to the meaning of the work of art is a measure of the work's significance and, hence, its value. It's because of this interdependence of meaning and value that art critics seldom make direct judgmental statements about works of art. Rather, they imbed their evaluations in their interpretations.

There are occasions, nevertheless, when we need to make more precise kinds of evaluations. These occasions occur when, for instance, we are faced with a new and unfamiliar work of art, when our experience with the work of art is unclear, or when we are in conflict with others over the significance of the work of art. On these occasions we need to give reasons for our evaluations and to base such reasons on valid criteria or standards.

Criteria for judging or evaluating the work of art need to be derived from one's conception of aesthetic experience. As stated earlier an experience

is "an intrinsic experience, and experience which is valued for itself." Since the primary function of a work of art within the context of the method of criticism advanced here is to provide opportunities for such aesthetic experiences, then the following criteria can be identified:

1. Does the work of art provide opportunities for intense aesthetic experiences?
2. Does the work of art represent a continuous source of such experiences?
3. Does the work of art make efficient and effective use of its materials and techniques, images, symbols, and signs in achieving its aesthetic ends?

Each of these three criteria refer to the second step in art criticism--interpretation--and ask of the meaning found "does it add significantly to the aesthetic dimension of experience?" Some works of art may have much to say and say it badly. Other works of art may have something to say and having said it have nothing else to offer. Finally, there are works of art which have something to say, say it well, and continue to offer new, richer aesthetic experiences each time the work of art is encountered.

Evaluation brings closure to the process of criticizing the work of art. Beginning with description the viewer gradually comes to determine the meaning of the work of art and to evaluate the significance of that meaning to the aesthetic dimension of his experience.

There are many subtleties of the contextualist theory of art missing from this "bare bones" description of a method of art criticism. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this method is easily adapted to classroom use. In the elementary school it can take the form of an elaborate "show and tell" or a kind of detective game. In the secondary school it can be approached more formally and in greater depth. In either case, by acquiring skill in art criticism students will have more authentic and educationally useful experiences with works of art than otherwise would be the case.

Without works of art there can be no art criticism. Thus we come to the second major requirement for the study of art criticism in the classroom. Works of art, or good reproductions of works of art must be available to students so that they may practice the skills and apply the concepts of art criticism. Moreover, not just any works of art will do. Works of art to be used in the study of art criticism must be selected on the basis of at least two criteria. The first criterion is that the meaning or significance of a specific work of art must be comprehensible to the students who are to criticize it. A complex work of art such as Picasso's "Guernica" would be beyond the ken of elementary school students. They would not have the range of experiences or the sense of social responsibility necessary to grasp the enormity of the act of war, especially when the act of war is inflected on defenseless mothers and their children.

The second criterion for the selection of works of art to be used in the study of art criticism is that each work selected must be capable of extending the students' understanding of the nature of art. As we all know, classroom time is valuable, too valuable to be used in criticizing works of art, the meaning and significance of which do not significantly add to the growth of the students. We should examine each work of art we intend to use with students for the learning potential of the work. If the students are having difficulties being precise in their descriptions then we would want to select a progression of works of art which would require increasingly more complex descriptions. If we desire students to broaden their understandings of the kinds and varieties of meanings works of art may express, then we would want to select works of art on this basis. Here we might select exemplary examples of various "isms"--cubism, expressionism, surrealism--or examples of recurrent themes in art--motherhood, piety, love--in order that students may discover the expressive range of works of art.

The selection of the broad range of works of art, or, more likely, reproductions of works of art, needed for a comprehensive study of art criticism in the classroom is no simple task. Each work selected must be appropriate to students with whom it will be used and, simultaneously, must serve to extend the students' understanding of the nature of art. While anyone of us probably could do this selecting it would require access to a large number of works to say nothing of the enormous expenditure of time that such a process requires. Here we could do well to take a lesson from the Picture Study Movement and look to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for assistance on such a project. They, more easily than we, can rally the resources needed to select works of art for the purposes just described, and, since such works would be of value to a large number of school districts, the Department of Education probably could arrange much more favorable prices than any one school district could achieve.

I have deliberatley postponed to the end a discussion of the third major requirement for the study of art criticism in the classroom because I believe that by now you already have a good idea of those reasons from examples given earlier. Nevertheless, I will discuss them so that I can be reasonably sure that these reasons are clear.

There is a subtle but important distinction between art criticism as practiced by the professional and art criticism as practiced by the student in the classroom. The distinction is not so much one of differences in experiences and education as it is one of purpose. For the professional art critic the purpose of art criticism is to determine the meaning and value of specific works of art toward the end of guiding viewers in their apprehension of these works of art. For the student the purpose of art criticism also is to determine the meaning and value of specific works of art but toward a different end, the development of a comprehensive understanding of the nature of art and its role in human affairs. If we keep this distinction clearly in mind as we design curricula in art, and guide our students in the acquisition of critical skills then the study of art criticism will achieve, in large measure, many of the objectives of the newly revised curriculum regulations and the Goals of Quality Education in the Arts and Humanities.

Footnotes

1. Reading Times, Reading, PA, date unknown.

2. Mississippi Elementary School Curriculum, Grades I-VIII. Mississippi State Department of Education, 1926, p. 54.

3. Teachers' Manuals for the Elementary Schools of Washington, Washington Department of Public Instruction, 1905, p. 100.

4. A Course of Study for the Elementary Schools of Maine, State of Maine Education Department, 1895, p. 55.

5. Course of Study for the Elementary Schools of South Dakota, South Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 1917, p. 45.

6. Ibid., p. 45.

7. Ibid., p. 45.

8. Courses of Study for Normal Training Classes in High Schools, State of Wyoming Department of Education, 1931, p. 57.

9. Ibid., p. 57.

10. Ibid., p. 57.

11. Instructor Picture Studies--Group One, John T. Lemos, F.A. Owen Publishing Company, Dansville, NY. Unpaginated.

12. Ibid.

13. Syllabus for Picture Study Prescribed for the Elementary Grades of North Dakota. State of North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, 1927, p. 7.

14. Ibid.

15. Handbook for Elementary and Secondary Schools, North Carolina, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1947, p. 198.

16. Ibid., p. 199.

17. Louisiana Program for the Improvement of Instruction--Third Bulletin, State Department of Education of Louisiana, 1938, p. 106.

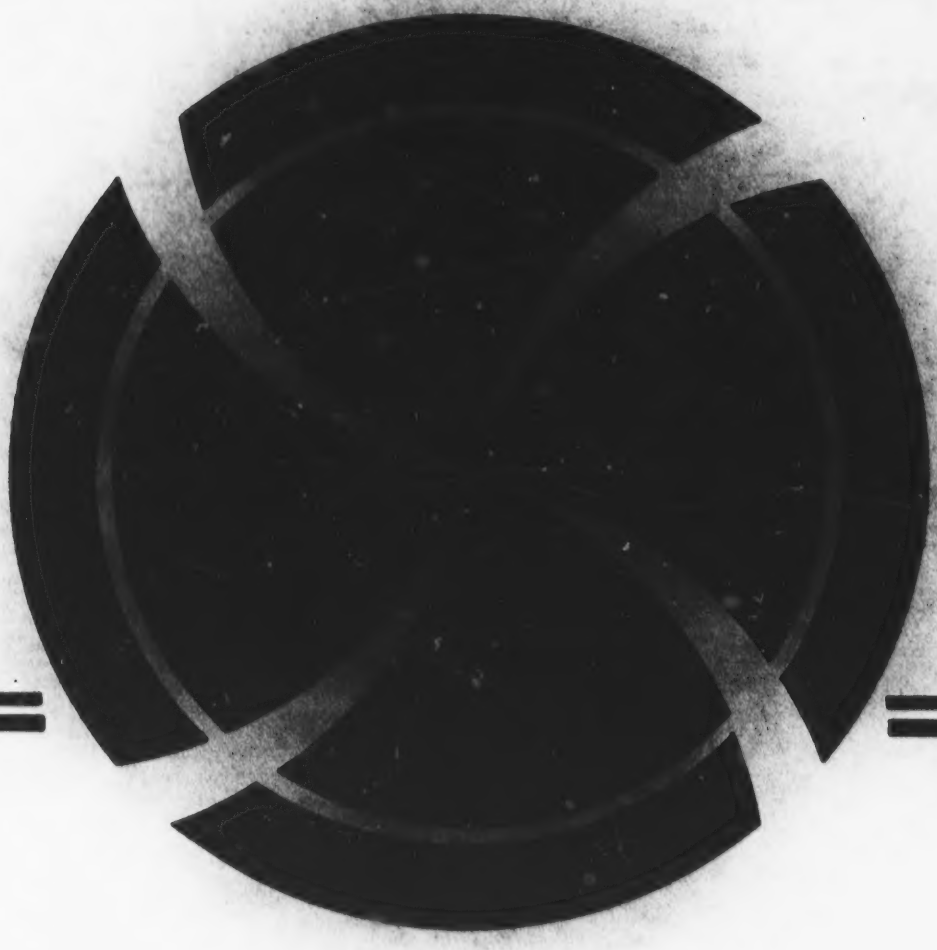
18. Children Learn and Grow Through Art Experiences: The Subject Field Series--Bulletin No. C-4. The Illinois Curriculum Program, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1958, p. XIV.

19. A Pattern for Art, K-12, Oregon Department of Education, 1981, p. 7.

20. Visual Arts Education Guidelines, K-12 Georgia Department of Education, 1982, p. 11.

21. Regulations of the State Board of Education of Pennsylvania, Chapter 5, Curriculum Regulations. Pennsylvania State Board of Education, 1983, p. 12-42M.

Art Studio



"THE STUDIO ARTIST"

A COMPONENT OF A K-12 SCHOOL ART CURRICULUM

by

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I Who is the Artist?

I have been asked to speak to you regarding a component of a K-12 curriculum modelled after the studio artist. In order to do that, we must first examine how we interpret the words "studio artist." Before developing goals for acquiring skills and behaviors of the studio artist, we first need to define who she or he is.

Perhaps we are at a good starting point: she or he? For hundreds of years, writers on art in Europe and America have written about him. The artist was a male. His attributes were valid in the context of his masculinity. He could be independent, eccentric, and even spurn responsibilities. These qualities were privileges which to some degree pertained or at least were tolerated amongst men. These same traits among women were objectionable to say the least.

But the American man didn't really fit the role of artist either. The American, male or female, never was considered a real artist. Real artists were European. Why? Because Americans believed they lacked the culture and exposure to art that developed taste. If Americans of the nineteenth century aspired to be artists, Europe was the route for their becoming one. Americans became expatriates for long periods. They painted in ateliers and sipped drinks in Parisian cafes, meanwhile acquiring the patina of culture and the title of "Artist" that they brought home with them to their native soil.

We may like to feel we have outgrown these Victorian American/European prejudices, but I see evidence that they still hold a firm grip on us. When we think of curriculum concerning the studio artist, of whom should we think? We need to think of the cultures of all of our students. What we teach about art today must acknowledge and reflect a sensitivity toward our past prejudices. There were artists in many times and many cultures. What we teach about artists' behaviors today must have the scope to embrace both sexes and diverse cultures in all their variety.

As we look at people who paint, carve, weave, and make pots in cultures across the globe, we see that the definition of the "artist," the one who may do such work, is widely varied. In some cultures, only a man can make pots. His culture has its reasons, deeply embedded in the concept of the male in that culture. That culture fulfills itself in his forming of pots. In another culture, it may just be the women who bring to the clay the characteristics that the culture needs carried in those vessels. As we in Boston teach newly immigrated children from Haiti, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Mexico, we see the collision of sharply divergent interpretations of art and who can make it. The collision is not only one immigrant culture in relation to another, but in relation to the American, indeed Western European culture in which they so suddenly find themselves. The premise then for my proposal is that the studio/performing artist must be seen as a recurrent figure across time and across cultures.

As part of our preparatory thinking, I recommend reviewing Edmund Feldman's book entitled The Artist. His chapter titles differentiate many facets and functions of artists. He argues that they existed in different eras and yet that all may coexist also within one era. According to Feldman, at any one moment people may be found who exemplify each of his prototypes:

The Shaman	Revolutionary Artists
The Naive Artist	Bohemian Artists
The Folk Artist	Illustrators
The Classical Artist	The Gallery Idol
Medieval Guildsmen	The Industrial Designer

As if the cultural diversity described earlier were not complex enough, these different artist roles also coexist. The question now is obvious: when we propose to teach about the skills of the studio artist, to which of these many prototypes do we refer? Are we cultivating magical healing powers of the shaman? Are we encouraging the simplest, uninfluenced graphic response of the naive? Different training could emphasize and address each of these different artist's strengths.

The education based upon the skills of the "studio artist" should selectively reflect all the functions that Feldman lists. Not only because they all are truly artists, but because they provide a <u>past</u> from which to form our curriculum and our present experience. Feldman describes well how the artist learns about art and artmaking. "Artists go forward only by consolidating and renewing their past."[1]

II <u>Rationale for the Schools</u>

Given the working definition of the studio artist as a person who forms objects according to the traditions and assumptions of his or her own culture, what might justify the inclusion of a curriculum component of such activity within the school experience for students from kindergarten through high school?

Perhaps one way to construct the rationale is to ask what would children <u>lose</u> if art according to the studio artist were not taught? The greatest loss, I believe, would be a sense of efficacy and power. Giving form to one's ideas and seeing them take shape and take up space in the world that is otherwise full of objects created by everyone else, is empowering to every student.

The studio artist across cultures lives in the world just as does everyone else. She or he uses cars, subways, airplanes, rafts, jeeps, or whatever to get from one place to another. Artists differ from others perhaps only in how they reflect upon that experience. Not only are they attentive to how cars look because they want to be safe, to be able to pass across a street without injury. They also are attentive to cars because they are looking at them to see what they can make out of their experience of them. The artist literally takes his experience and makes something of it. In giving a material form, she or he expresses what has otherwise just been taken in and kept within. The rationale then for teaching about the skills and behaviors of the studio artist should emphasize the giving of power to students, to allow them their own "voice" and encourage them to people their own world with ideas and objects of their own intentions.

This rationale grows directly from the theories of Francis Wayland Parker, who was a teacher, school district superintendent, and teacher of teachers in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Parker saw education as demanding two processes: attention (being attentive, looking, observing) and expression (giving form to one's ideas in clay, dance, song, paint, etc.). New observations are not truly understood until they are expressed in some formed thing. This model of learning reflects and matches the model of studio artists, who observe all the paraphernalia and rituals of life and then use them, transform them, into forms of their own making. Attention and expression are behaviors that characterize the working artist and the school child alike.

III Methods for Different Age Levels

The beauty of Parker's theory is its adaptability. It leaves room for the necessary modification to suit the developmental needs of an age level. The teaching methodology must reflect the changing capacities of students. In

elementary schools, the youngsters have special problems in understanding art at all and in understanding the artmaking behavior of the artist in particular. If the child is fortunate enough to have a parent or an aunt or uncle who paints or sculpts, that child may understand how artists make things and that the world of objects is a result of a multitude of people's efforts. Without role models, children many assume that art objects, like trees, just grow. They are just there and involve no more human intention.

Art making presents many problems for students. Even if they themselves "make paintings," their actions may never be associated with painting by another person. For example, young children paint on the floor. They think of that paper as space to run around in with their painty brush. When the paint dries and an adult chooses to hang it on a wall, they are puzzled. That paintings are like holes in walls, i.e., windows, views onto the world, is an acquired understanding.

Another characteristic of art that is alien to youngsters is the notion that an object is made to be <u>looked at</u>. A young child believes the piece he made is for his eyes and will be just as he thinks it and sees it, if another person views it. The notion of making something to please or surprise another person is alien to the young child and needs to be learned.

We are just emerging from a time of some thirty or more years when the child's obliviousness to artistic conventions--artistic behaviors--were seen as assets. Innocence was treasured and protected. But there really was a double message. Children were not taught conventions of adult artists (of the realistic school) <u>in order that</u>, by virtue of their innocence, they would produce images that looked like adult artistic conventions of another school, particularly that of abstract expressionism. Since children's artmaking inevitably gets drawn in with adult behaviors, tastes, and skills, it may be more honest to manipulate

childish innocence less and in fact be willing to instruct more. But, these issues remain to be debated. One way or another, the elementary school child does get led in the direction of adult art. Without that instruction, children would know nothing of it. The elementary school is the stage for the loss of artistic innocence and the beginning of the acquisition of skills.

The methodology for junior high school involves more than the initial exposure to the categories of art in the culture. Not only do students want to use clay to make sculpture, or paint to make paintings, but they want to use those media to show what is particularly preeminent to them in their world. The art forms become powerful ways of making other people see what you have noticed. Whether one is weaving or photographing or sculpting, the forms are deliberate incorporations of features that are noted and preserved from observations of the works of others. The middle school learner has the unique capacity to use the medium to work like others, adding features that are one's own. At this time copying becomes attractive. Depending upon the prevailing attitudes in the culture, this age group's copying will either win praise or disapproval. Angiola Churchill in her Art for the Pre-Adolescent cites the necessity of helping the youngster, who is attracted to the ways that artists work, differentiate himself from the artists he chooses to copy. The differentiation is a critical step in junior high school studios that are organized around the skills and behaviors of the artist. The temptation to imitate and to merge with one's role model or graphic example is enormous. The methodology must take this temptation into account.

By high school the behaviors of the artist take on yet a different meaning. In adolescence the priority is to worry and wonder about how "I" appear. The adolescent who always performs before an imaginary audience sees not only himself

but every bit that he produces as the object of everyone else's scrutiny. Each mark on paper must be something by which one would happily be known and with which one might be remembered forever.

In high school, identification with particular artists could be a device for becoming comfortable as an artmaker at all. It is a way of sampling types of artists, types of people, that one might grow up to be. It's a way of finding out who the "I" in each person is and toward what that individual is drawn. The range of options--the types of artist role models that are shown to young people--vary as a function of time and culture. At the turn of the century, the art images presented in schools as part of the Picture Study Movement all showed sweet, decorous children, revering strong and gracious adults. Though more intense and tempestuous styles of picturing and subject matter were indeed available at that time, the school child saw none of that. In other cultures, where clay or weaving are the primary art forms, young people of course will draw upon those art media and what different masters had chosen to make with them. Choice and mastery are key issues in the adolescent's absorption of the studio art forming process.

Whatever the curriculum, these developmental tendencies must be taken into account. Though you can find a wide variability of interests and skills within any age group, certain fixed issues must be worked through at each stage before a child progresses on to the next. A kindergartener's absorption in a process and total obliviousness to the surroundings is a function of certain developmental tasks. Once those are worked through, they never show themselves in quite the same way again. Absorption in the artmaking process in junior high school and later on in high school involves wholly different issues on a psychological and art-learning plane.

IV Problems with Implementation

Though elements of the studio artist's practices may be integrated into schools, to replicate the depth of the art experience there is quite unlikely. I fear that artist's skills can't be learned in our chopped-up schools of discontinuous content. It also becomes ever more difficult to exercise those artist skills even as an adult in our society.

Here is the problem as I see it. Art making is about another kind of time than most of us have. Ruminations, privacy, room for quite un-understandable choices, all require time, big chunks of time for preparing, poking about, wrong routes, and re-routing. By contrast, our culture is about speed, efficiency, doing it right the first time, and living on profits made from those speedy decisions.

I believe that this characteristic of our time is causing and has caused an invisible and therefore hardly examined transformation of learning. Americans with visions of cars, garages, and betamaxes have become too impatient to spend day after day pursuing a work whose standards are set by inner demands. In this society few choose to sustain a time-consuming art such as wood engraving, which like Oriental rug making, produces very little yardage for hours and hours of work. Art is a processed object. Even as we speed up our materials production and image production, art still requires time, time, time, to think, to meander, to invent and decide. And everything in our culture tells us, even in childhood, that such activities are luxurious squanderings of time.

Studio work is so demanding because, among other things, it presupposes a depth of knowledge of past art forms and the cultures from which they grew. Studio work is inseparable from the study of art history, criticism, and aesthetic literacy. An art education is a long, demanding education.

We are living through a time in which many Americans were exposed in their college years to some of the finest training in art history, criticism, and studio art. They met the aesthetic ideals of Piero della Francesca and Diego Velasquez when they were still in college during those formative years of late adolescence. In a way unprecedented in history, young people educated in the fifties and sixties saw more great art than ever before in recorded time. The invention of the art slide, the high quality art reproduction, and the interpretive text, the denser the better, all inspired awe, admiration, and, yes, imitation. These are today's art teachers. These no-longer young people are now middle aged. Having learned to think about the best art and the forms it has taken and even who paid for it and where and why it was hung, they became a generation who knows better than any before what art can be. All this education, though, is crammed into over-stuffed schedules. These adults now are racing to make money, make relationships, make their mark in an overly rich, overly demanding, speeded-up society. How can the next generations of art consumers--those college age youngsters--ever grow up to give to art the priority it demands? They have a choice to forget it all--like an adolescent's first love, best obliterated--or to integrate some speeded-up visible trace of the activity for which there is no time in this culture.

One colleague of mine who is an art historian and artist, productive in both domains, accounts for the development of his style and his choice of materials as a direct result of the fact that his time is so scarce. His work demands that he teach, write, lecture, and travel abroad as well as paint, sculpt, exhibit, and sell, all in one lifetime.

As educators at the end of the twentieth century, we have some powerful decisions to make. Perhaps we should not and cannot suggest that the depth and commitment of an artist's work is even possible at this point in time. Unless one is on social security, or hospitalized, or privately wealthy, that kind of time is

not ours. Even with outside financial resources, everything in this culture presses one away from privacy and the individualization of one's experience.

Brent Wilson in that wonderful article, "The Other Side of Evaluation," talks about time. Time that extends way beyond graduation is the time we really need to see the effects of art teaching. Not only is the forty-four minute period insane as a unit for learning anything, but it absolutely undermines the possibility of commitment to sustained thought, which I have already argued is the heart of art-making. If the forty-four minute, or yes sometimes fifty minute, period is destructive to work in other subjects, History, English, and Math, it perpetrates a lie about art thinking as well. Unless kids are told upfront by their art teacher that they are experiencing a somewhat tortured, twisted version of the studio process--I'd prefer that there be NO studio practice, NO STUDIO PROMISES that mislead youngsters and create a whole mess of unfelt and unthought-through production assignments. The art faculty should know the difference. They are in the midst of a moral dilemma. If we say that studio art in the schools is a mere taste of a grand banquet, when do they get a chance to eat? If they start equating their little "tastes" with the real thing, we've totally subverted the power that makes our disciplines so surpassing in importance.

V One Art or Many Arts?

It should be stated explicitly that the subject of my paper is no academic exercise. Unlike the other three categories or sub-disciplines addressed in this conference that have had too little attention in the too limited school day, the curriculum based upon the skills and behaviors of the studio artist has been the dominant, most tried of the four.

The production of images and objects has been the object of art instruction since its widespread inclusion in the public school curriculum in the last quarter

of the last century. Though the educational rationale for production may have undergone many changes, the single continuous thread is the modelling of art instruction upon studio artists' behaviors. Victor Lowenfeld's philosophy, so dominant in twentieth century America, promulgated curriculum for children modelled on his and the pervasive Germanic notions of artists as expressive beings. The American schools of this century have been a living laboratory of what may happen if the art curriculum is based upon his view of the "studio artist." Noteworthy is the fact that most people would not recognize that fact, nor would they know that a choice has been made. The choice is invisible, I suspect because the chosen image of the artist as one who is spontaneous and expressive is so adaptable to children's behaviors. Other artistic ideals might have led to very different studio instruction, e.g., drawing from spotlighted plaster casts and geometrical forms.

Now what if the studio artist ideal was presented as an individual who composed music, created dances and also danced them? In fact historically across cultures usually one person did enjoy more than one art form. In terms of my task here, such an artist ideal would lead to a different type of school curriculum.

I have been opposed to the multi-arts or unified arts approach to education, not because there aren't solid links and richness across the arts, but simply because there is not enough time. Though an artist like Paul Klee was a musician and puppeteer as well as a painter, he didn't learn all he knew in a forty-four minute period once a week. Unless there is a rich opportunity to explore and know the traditions within different media, the inter-arts approach can only yield a diluted, dilettante misunderstanding of what either or any of the arts are within their own context. That tasting party of the visual arts becomes an even more trivial pursuit when mashed together, compressing several arts into the same tiny amount of time.

There is no question that there are profound ties and wonderful flowerings in the different arts when they interact with each other in the great outside world. I fear the motives for integrating the arts are not to yield those fruits but to save dollars by hiring fewer arts teachers. If one person teaches drawing and dance and chorus, that saves a lot of money. Schools must watch out. Too often what may be dressed up as an educational program may be a wolf in sheep's clothing, may be a way to cut teachers and save money, while appearing to teach more.

Make no mistake, were an entire school schedule formed of the arts, where there was time to link literature, science, and history to music, theater, painting, and film, that could be quite a special school. Rudolf Arnheim, writing of his Berlin student days, tells of how he was nourished by the flowering of Expressionist painting and theater, the publications of Freud, the burgeoning of a new art form: the film. He synthesized these as they were part of the air he breathed. They were not dosed out in small student portions. These arts were the vital living culture that filled all his days.

VII Conclusion

If the studio artist is an organizing concept for an art curriculum, it has overwhelming problems to solve. First and perhaps easiest, it must wrestle with and overcome the European romantic artist-in-the-garret image, and reach and touch girls and boys who can identify with the behaviors that are program goals. This may best be achieved by widening and diversifying the image of the artist, to include men and women who are artists of different cultures who prize different media and skills, ascribing the gamut of values such as Feldman suggested within his typology.

The next, perhaps insurmountable, problem is that of time. Too large and deep a process is forced to chop itself to bits in the school schedule. Something must be done to allow more time, more connections of knowledge that is connected, so that

art may regain its proper priority in our culture. Quality art programs in long after-school sessions in neighborhood centers or community schools, such as New York's legendary Henry Street Settlement, may perhaps supplement the schedule of the school day. Perhaps in school and outside even the study of artists' lives, the demands of their work and the scope of their ambitions, may raise the expectations of students of what they may even hope for from the study of art.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to using the studio artist as the model of curriculum ties back to a larger problem in our culture as a whole. That is the crisis of the contemporary artist. I already have spoken of the wish for quick success and its undermining effect upon slow, sustained, quiet work which art-making requires. Another part of the problem, which is a crisis of the contemporary artist, is the lack of mission, or perhaps "content." Again referring to that marvelous autobiographical article of Rudolf Arnheim, when he writes about painting for painters, he says, "Try for your life to be about something. Because unless it is, your pictures won't amount to anything.... You see, because any artist, in whatever he does, does something which he has to do with a certain deepened experience of what life is.... A man like Matisse was a wise man. A man like Jackson Pollack had a way of looking at the world which was very striking and which nobody had ever had before. And that's what his pictures are about. If you're only interested in "This is a shape" and "This is a color" and "This goes together" ... you're not going to make it.... If you read what the painters have written, if you read what the sculptors have said, you find that they were interested in the same thing the philosophers are interested in. And that's not a luxury, that's indispensable."[2]

The importance of art in the lives of students emerges when art becomes a way of reflecting upon and working through real experiences. Whether it is through story-writing or poetry, painting or sculpting, most adults who are artists can remember that first moment when they were touched by the power their medium held

for dealing with themselves. It felt like a too-well-kept secret. Why didn't everyone know that they were entitled to work through the pleasures, loves, and worries of their lives, by making something of it? Only when school's can capture that power, of caring about something so much that you want to give it form--only then does art-making in the school have the power that art can have in the culture at large. The problem to reiterate is that at this moment the adults who are practicing artists are none too clear about their own choices. Decorative and trivial work in many galleries has little to do with more profound concerns and much to do with money and power. Tom Wolfe's recent article in Harper's conjures the situation and will no doubt open much discussion.[3]

At this moment, the interpretation of the studio process in our culture is of priority to me personally. First of all, I hardly ever paint any more, and I'm struggling to figure out why. Painting was the most important process of my life. Secondly, much of what I see marketed as art is so trivial that I have little interest in being near it. Finally, I am head of a department of Art Education. It is central to my mission to develop, with our faculty, a point of view of what pursuits in art education are possible and valuable in our present lifetimes. To pursue this interpretation of what art-making means to us in this culture, I have spent ten years researching the history of art education. I wanted to uncover the reasons that anyone ever thought it was worthwhile to teach art in the public schools at all or to the public at large, of any age. What I found out is soon to be published and reveals a large problem. The goals of art education grew out of the model of industrial production, not individual studio process. Throughout the past hundred years, that industrial model has overtaken all of education, not just that of our subject. Until we define new goals for what education as a whole is for, for the next hundred years ahead of us in the culture, we're sunk. We must remember that art education never was about the individual art studio process. Sorry, but that's the source of the problem. The confusions can be traced at greater length,

but that is not appropriate here. I have done that in my book. Suffice it to say, our CULTURE, not just we as art educators, has work to do. We've got to figure out, in all our diversity of ages, backgrounds, media, regional habits, what in the world art-making <u>can</u> mean for us.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Edmund Feldman, The Artist, Englewood, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982, p. 222.

[2]Rudolf Arnheim, "My Life in the Art World," Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1984, p. 15.

[3]Tom Wolfe, "The Worship of Art," Harper's Magazine, October 1984, pp. 61-68.

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Aesthetics

Aesthetics, Cornerstone of the Art Curriculum

Vincent Lanier

Running head: Aesthetics, Curriculum Cornerstone

RATIONALE

Recent developments in art teaching, now called "discipline based art education", emphasize the importance of learning about the visual arts. This approach includes the production of art, art criticism, and art history as modes for accumulating the requisite knowledges, skills, and attitudes within the art field. One critical aspect of this learning usually omitted in past and present writings is the area of aesthetics. Knowing about what we conceive to be the nature of art and aesthetic experience and investigating how we deal with aesthetic stimuli appears to be a reasonable starting point for learning about the visual arts. With some insight into our own aesthetic functioning, we can more adequately explore the history of particular art works and how we can talk about them. Neither the production of art, nor art criticism, nor art history, concerns itself with the viewer; all of these focus on the work of art or its creation. Each learner--child or adult--is a viewer of aesthetic objects and will enjoy a lifetime of such viewing. Our obligation is to enlarge and enhance those viewing experiences.

AESTHETICS, CORNERSTONE OF THE ART CURRICULUM

If the teaching of art is to include components other than production, what might these elements be and how can they serve to educate the young in those learnings and growths we wish for them? This paper takes the position that one important component of art learning is aesthetics and that it can easily serve as content for any school level. In order to argue this assertion, I will make several assumptions.

The first of these is that the reader does not necessarily support but does understand the validity of aesthetic literacy as a primary purpose in the teaching of art. Appreciation is the product of knowledge; to effectively and satisfactorily respond to aesthetic stimuli, we must know something about them. The ability to generate cultivated response to a wide range of aesthetic stimuli should be the single preeminent purpose of art education. It can stand alone as justification for art as part of the school curriculum. Let me quote an earlier writing in which I explained this point.

> What we can argue with unreserved enthusiasm and some certainty, is that seeing the image of art or seeing anything aesthetically is one of the ways in which we insert meaning and value into the world around us. It is not the only way and it is not the most important way, but it is one way, and hence, of relevance and significance to the process of education. There is far too much of obvious intellectual and aesthetic worth among the monuments and artifacts of past and present cultures to dismiss or diminish the visual arts in the education of the young. We should not have to exaggerate our claims of merit; adequately stated, they should speak for themselves. (Lanier, 1981, p. 15)

A second assumption is that knowledge about art is more efficiently promoted by studying art rather than by making it. The traditional and present studio school curriculum does not and cannot produce adequate

knowledge about art or the nature of aesthetic response; indeed, historical and contemporary ideas as to goals and outcomes of studio curricula have logically concentrated on developmental benefits, such as creativity, therapy and visual literacy, rather than knowledge about art. One cannot learn about art simply by doing it, unless one does it at a sophisticated level and for a considerable length of time. Thus, if our conception of significant purpose in art teaching is aesthetic literacy, it follows that our curriculum content must be altered to provide experiences and learnings more appropriate to that task than today's overwhelmingly manipulative art programs.

A third assumption is that aesthetic response to natural phenomena, the vernacular arts, industrial and commercial objects, is no different in kind from response to the fine arts; these are all substantially similar experiences. Whatever qualitative differences may exist among these art forms--and no doubt there are significant differences in specific instances--do not automatically confer superior aesthetic capability on any one form of art. Listening to Michael Jackson might provoke as potent an aesthetic response to some of us as listening to Issac Stern may to others. In order to expand the range of objects to which young people do have such responses, it is necessary to deal with all parts of the artistic spectrum in the classroom.

A fourth assumption is that the extent of the knowledge on the basis of which appreciation is generated must include knowing about the nature of aesthetic experience, at least insofar as we are able to muster theories in that realm that are reasonable and persuasive. Once we understand, as well as we presently can, how

our own aesthetic responses operate, selecting what to learn about a particular stimulus, be it a record album cover or a Renaissance painting, is much less of a problem. Among the shortcomings of both aesthetic education and discipline based art education, as these are presently explained and explored, is their inadequacy in regard to the discipline of aesthetics itself. This paper will present a coherent plan to include that material in the art curriculum. What is offered here is not the only way to do that and, perhaps, it is not the best way to do that; but it is one way, and the only one available at the moment.

Since this plan to include the material of aesthetics in the school art curriculum, may be considerably different in its flavor than curriculum ideas with which the reader is familiar, there are two problems which must be addressed before we can deal with it. The first is the question of revising the term "perception of art", customarily used to describe the apprehension and comprehension of an aesthetically stimulating object or event. I submit the term is an excellent example of the unfortunate influence that psychology has had on thinking in our field. To label this complex operation perception is worse than simply misleading; it is a misdirection that has hampered our insight into aesthetic functioning. The proper term for what occurs is negotiation.

It is perfectly clear, when one's thinking is guided by appropriate framing, that the relationship between the viewer and the aesthetic stimulus (the work of art) is reciprocal or transactional. One puts into an art work, just as one takes out of it; the proportion of each function depending on the particular work and the particular viewer.

No human being is simply a sponge who soaks up what is around to be absorbed, but, rather, a catalyst who reacts upon the material imbibed. As a result of this misunderstanding, we anxiously include art criticism which focuses on the work of art, within the content of an expanded discipline based curriculum, and at the same time we ignore aesthetics, the only art area concerned with the viewer's contribution to the aesthetic act. The specifics of that contribution are critical to our teaching plan and will be explored here. I should admit, however, that as convinced as I am of the erroneous nature of the term perception of art, I was forced to use it as the title of the third chapter of my last two books, so relentless is the grip of custom and the influence of psychology on art education.

The second problem is to discard the misleading and inadequate concept of developing curriculum based on the behaviors of practitioners in the arts, namely, the artist, the art historian, and the art critic. The behavior model idea originated in the 1961 work of Jerome Bruner, entitled The Process of Education, (Bruner) and became the structural frame of reference of aesthetic education. Bruner's hypothesis, that the pupil learning physics is a physicist may have currency in the sciences; that the child learning art is an artist, a critic, an historian, or an aesthetician, is open to serious question. The least of the problems this idea presents is which artist, art critic, art historian, or aesthetician is to be selected as the model? The differences among members of each group are considerable (Simpson, p. 92). Further, there is the problem of the validity of the concept itself. For example, perhaps the most definitive attribute of the artist--a

necessary though not sufficient attribute--is the command of formal visual relationships in the formation of aesthetic objects. It can be argued that children and other naive shapers of objects do not manifest that command consistently and, therefore, are not behaving as artists.

This analysis is not meant to demean the aesthetic merit of children's production with art materials, which like other aesthetic stimuli, may be independent of their artistic qualities. It does question Bruner's dictum and suggests that pupils in a classroom cannot be expected to be taught to perform in any way meaningfully similar to the adult role model. Like small children doing "surgery" on candy animals, the motions may be reminiscent of the adult activity, but the understanding of the complexities involved is largely missing. While we can effectively use the content of the domains of these role models, we should be careful to focus on the substance rather than the procedure.

Finally, the role model idea appears to carefully avoid the one behavioral template that might supply the validity it lacks. The pupil learning physics or the pupil learning art is a consumer, behaving with those knowledges and skills appropriate to the use of the discipline in his or her life. Very few of the children in our schools become physicists or artists or art critics; every one of them becomes and is now, in fact, a consumer of both physics and art. Let me state the thought another way, in another's words, "If we can't bring students to a better understanding of the meaning behind the artistic process, then we are only dealing with part of the picture. The part of art experience which concerns Lanier may well be the realm of art in which

students will live long after they have abandoned the making of art." (Hurwitz, p. 50).

If the model of behavior we used was the consumer, Bruner's contention would be less troublesome. A clear illustration of the distinction I am making is to be found in the teaching of science in secondary and higher education. What is now done is to teach, let us say,chemistry so that the student is behaving like a chemist, including laboratory procedures. For the same investment of time and energy, students could learn about chemistry, and biology and physics, and how these bodies of knowledge affect their lives. As for scientific method, which is often the rationale given for lab activities, it is a concept, not a laboratory procedure and can be learned in other contexts.

The material on aesthetics which we will examine here is presented to the end of developing effective consumers of art and is addressed to all of our school pupils. There is, however, for those who are concerned about the question, nothing to keep us from providing special classes or other contexts to teach those young people who wish to become artists, or critics, or historians, or aestheticians. In our concern for the many there is no reason or excuse to neglect the few.

If we look for a moment at the Curriculum Regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education under Educational Planning and Assessment (5.13), we see (f, 5) listed the category of Arts and the Humanities. Within this category, the first two objectives are particularly noteworthy. "(i) Comprehension of principles and concepts

in art, music, craftsmanship, other discrete arts, and the humanities. (ii) Understanding of the influence of literature, philosophy, and tradition in shaping our heritage". The language of this part of the document clearly indicates--at least to me--a significant concern for knowledge about art and (most important for my argument) a recognition of the value of ideas and the history of ideas. I do not believe that the term philosophy is used frivolously; it is a studied and I might add welcome inclusion of thought as basic curriculum material. Aesthetics is thought about the arts, or other aesthetically provocative objects and events. Indeed, by tradition, aesthetics, like logic, ethics, metaphysics and epistemology, is part of the subject matter of philosophy. It would be difficult to have an adequate understanding of the world around us if we were not to know something about aesthetic experience, which is a considerable part of the way we relate to that world. It seems to me that the Pennsylvania Curriculum Regulations mandate the study of aesthetics in the schools and I would include that study as part of art education.

A second important aspect of the language of the Regulations is the consistent interweaving of the arts with the humanities. Once again this is a deliberate connection and one which suggests that among the meanings available in the study of the arts can be found some which pertain to what it is to be a human being. These are more readily available in literature, due to the nature of the art form (literature uses words and has sequence), but can be obtained in the study of the visual arts as well. Further, I submit that this sentence refers to the social nature of art; not only is a work of art made by an artist

(a factor we in art education have tended to exaggerate, involved as we are in the studio), but it is formed in no small measure by the particular time and social context in which it is created. All the arts help us to understand how people live and have lived, how they thought and felt about living, and what they dreamed and wished. In this sense, the arts and the humanities are part of our heritage, our common heritage as humans, overwhelming boundaries of time, place, race, culture, and politics. It is a significant sentence and I applaud its presence in the document.

In what follows, I will present two areas of the content of aesthetics, as I see them. The reader will realize that there is much more to be dealt with in this discipline. These two areas appear to be the most important to our purpose of teaching young people about art and the most relevant to the spirit and language of the regulations.

In order to design curricula which reflect the kinds of knowledge about art and aesthetic experience emphasized in this paper, we need to arrange the most economical map of the terrain to be covered that we can devise. Although there are several such arrangements, the least complicated one that I have come across is that of Berleant (p. 49). I have simplified that somewhat and will use it here. The components of aesthetic experience, what Berleant calls "the aesthetic field", are made up of the viewer, the object and the history (or story would be more accurate except for the connotation of fiction certainly not intended here) of the aesthetic situation. The viewer apprehends, comprehends and responds to (that is, appreciates or does not appreciate) the ooject within the context of the viewing situation. The contributions

of the object to this negotiation are, perhaps, the most obvious and it is at this point that both art history and art criticism become relevant, not to say critical, disciplines to the study of art. Colleagues in the presentations of this conference will address these two disciplines, as well as that of the artist. Since this is the case, I will concentrate on the viewer as a component. For it is in this area that aesthetics as a field of study has the most to offer to art education.

Ideas about the viewer as an element in the aesthetic act should be highly motivational both inside and outside the classroom. You, the reader, are the viewer in an aesthetic negotiation and if you are a teacher, your students are the viewers in like situations. It is unlikely that the young are disinterested in understanding something about those experiences they value highly; the sales of record albums and tapes alone indicates the vital nature of aesthetic response to young people. For the art teacher to capitalize on this love of arts among the school population requires suggestions that clarify possible areas of content. In fact, some art teachers now use this kind of material to support mainly manipulative curricula. Logically, therefore, the first task of the teacher using aesthetics in an art program is to provoke a classroom situation in which pupils raise questions about the nature of their own aesthetic responses, or in simple terms, why do they enjoy looking at some record album covers, some posters, some clothing, and so on? Why do they prefer some posters over other even similar posters? How can we explain what is happening to each of us when we think and feel that what we are looking at is beautiful? Why are some films immediate box office sensations while others lose money?

All of these questions and more are the questions asked by philosophers when they deal with aesthetic theory and they have a wide variety of answers. The professional philosopher, of course, asks and answers these questions more elegantly than I have done and sometimes in language and convolutions of thought quite difficult to understand. Nevertheless, these and others are the basic issues; there is nothing mysterious or incomprehensible about the questions of philosophy. The clearest parallel is the kind of question every teenager asks himself or herself as to what is the universe, what is our own individual part in it, and what does it mean? Philosophers call this area of speculation metaphysics.

Obviously, the answers to questions about the nature of aesthetic experience will have to be simplified drastically if we are to teach these ideas on the secondary level and even more for the elementary. There are some who would carp at such liberties with important and complex writings. Those who complain, however, are usually those who do not share with most of us here the necessity to explain as much of the world as we can to children. Others will complain correctly that aesthetic theory is all speculation and that there are no totally adequate answers in this area. Again, teachers do not have the leeway of scholars; one can hardly tell the inquisitive pupil to come back in 20 years (or 120 years), when philosophers have concocted adequate answers. Consequently, the reader who is philosophically sophisticated will have to tolerate both simplification and popularization in what follows.

The central question dealt with by aestheticians up to the recent past has been, what is art? The contemporary aesthetician asks a somewhat broader question, namely, what is aesthetic experience or aesthetic value.

The critical differences between these two questions and their impact on teaching will be apparent as we progress in this description. Most textbooks or histories of aesthetics group the categories of answers to these questions in something like the following manner. Once again, I have simplified these categories. There are five groups of answers: Imitation, Emotionalism, Intuitionism, Formalism and V aluation. A brief look at each cluster of ideas will reveal that they can be used in the classroom and that they should be used in the spirit of Weitz's classic comment, "It behooves us to deal generously with the traditional theories of art; because incorporated in every one of them is a debate over and argument for emphasizing or centering upon some particular feature of art which has been neglected or perverted...it (aesthetic theory) teaches us what to look for and how to look at it in art." (Weitz, p. 208).

Perhaps the oldest group of ideas is usually called Imitation theory. These concepts maintain that art is versimilitude; art is the imitation of life. In truth, these early ideas have much currency since many of us use such a yardstick in talking about some of the arts. Most of us here do not do so when talking about the contemporary visual arts, where versimilitude has become marginally acceptable in only one particular style. But we might comment on a film or television production noting its fidelity to reality. The actor "brought the character to life" is a comment even you and I might make. But such an aesthetic theory tells us little about the multiple dimensions of our experience of art. The second group of ideas tells us a bit more.

Emotionalism indicates that art is the expression of the artist's emotions, an embodiment that provokes in us parallel feelings. Sometimes overt and consious, sometimes totally symbolic and subconscious, it is the art form's ability to communicate these emotions that gives it recognizable value. However, aside from some serious difficulties with the efficacy of communication with visual symbols which art educators have still to resolve, emotionalism as an explanation of art seems also to be fragmented. Surely one must recognize the function of the intellect in the arts. Formalism, the next idea does just that; it asserts that art is exclusively a matter of the formal qualities of visual relationships that structure works of art. It is the design or composition that makes a work of art a powerful stimulant and this "significant form" is at least in part a cognitive element. Other considerations, especially representational, are non-aesthetic in nature. This theory tastes much more satisfying to most of us, accustomed as we are to reading the formalist critics of this century and seems to deal fairly with the bulk of what we have been trained to teach in our classrooms, design principles. Nevertheless, this theory tells us little about how composition affects us, nor does it explain our undeniable involvement with content. As Ben Shahn neatly put it, "Form is the shape of content." The next theory appears to address this lack.

Intuitionism claims that art is a confrontation of the spiritual or transcendental reality of which the naterial world is a reflection. Since universal harmonies and moral laws reside in this suprarational realm, the power of art, its aesthetic impact, derives from our recognition of what is being brought to us. Aside from the criticism that this tells

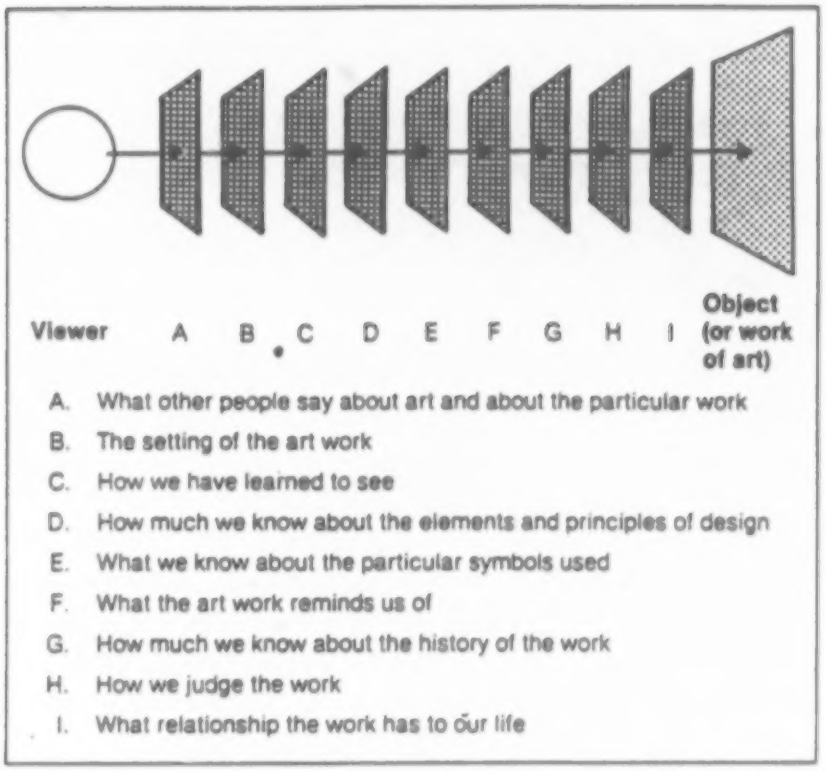
us little about the actual process of aesthetic response, the theory also rests on the presupposition of the existence of a level of reality, beyond the physical, that is highly controversial. One cannot accept this view of art without accepting the premise. The final and most recent gorup of theories, the one that will be recommended in this paper, I have called Valuation Theory. According to these ideas, aesthetic response is the placement of intrinsic value on an object or event. We recognize our experience as aesthetic when it is unconcerned with its consequences; the experience assumes value to us for its own sake. Dewey calls this characteristic "self-consummatory" and broadens the domain of the aesthetic beyond art to any experience having this quality.

Thus one can explain the kind of response all of us might share where an object is venerated for itself alone rather than what it can do for us. The 1937 Buick, refinished and polished to perfection, which cannot be driven' the forward pass in a football game which is gracefully executed but incomplete ; are examples of intrinsic valuation. What this final set of ideas does is to provide us with a practical and reasonably trustworthy explanation of the puzzle of aesthetic experience that we can provide to children, without ignoring or denying the other theoretical positions. Not only is there no harm in exposing children to a variety of even conflicting ideas, but I think it is the obligation of any conscientious teacher--as long as we do not leave them completely adrift. Valuation theory seems to me to be the most adequate available; one that will answer with fair clarity most of the questions we can

direct to the issue. Armed with this explanation as background we can then turn to the question of what is art, specifically, since that is more likely to be the answer they seek. In this context, a work of visual art is a made object we see which we value for its own sake.

This conception of aesthetic response and its application to the nature of art eliminates some of the serious disadvantages of other theories. It does not reduce art or aesthetic experience to one of its characteristics, such as emotion or cognition; it provides a logical continuity between the experience of art and other human experiences; and it accounts with fair authority for the tremendous diversity of stimuli designated as art or as aesthetically valuable by human beings throughout history--objects and events as varied as a bomb burst (by Vittorio Mussolini during the Ethiopian War) to twenty miles of white nylon fences across Marin County by the American artist Christo. It is a genuinely egalitarian and universal idea, explaining sunsets and rock formations, clothing and advertisements, as well as honorific art works in museums.

Having explored some of the answers to the basic question of the nature of art and aesthetic response, the teacher can turn to the issue of those factors that influence response to art; the perception--or as we have chosen to call it here--negotiation of art. Since art and, for that matter, most of the objects and events that provoke aesthetic response, is a social element, the concepts dealt with here are as much sociological in character as they are psychological. Within the context of school subject areas, they are even more narrowly the humanities,


Viewer
A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
Object (or work of art)
A. What other people say about art and about the particular work
B. The setting of the art work
C. How we have learned to see
D. How much we know about the elements and principles of design
E. What we know about the particular symbols used
F. What the art work reminds us of
G. How much we know about the history of the work
H. How we judge the work
I. What relationship the work has to our life

What we may think of as we look at art

Figure 1

since most of such speculation is hardly worthy of scientific stature. Although this characteristic does not make these ideas less valuable, it does make them more fragile and they should be taught in a tentative spirit.

A glance at the diagram appended to this paper as Figure 1, will reveal some of the factors which might be said to influence response to an art work. These are not intended to represent all the relevant factors, nor are they chronologically or hierarchically ordered. They seem, however, to cover much of what happens to us when we have experiences which we identify as aesthetic. They are some of the particulars of the negotiation in question. Some of them are more obvious than others and have a strong presence in the literature on the subject. For example, the history of the work (G) or the elements and principles of design (D) are factors in response to art that all of us recognize and about which much has been written. Some factors are less readily apparent and have not been emphasized in writings in the area. For example, what other people say about art and about the particular work (A) and what the art work reminds us of (F) might both play a large role in our response, but have not been investigated with care. A brief review of these last two factors should demonstrate the kind of knowledge about negotiating a work of art that teaching from a diagram such as this one would provide to pupils in an art learning situation.

All of us are aware that we grow up with attitudes toward the world around us that are consequences of our home and street life as children and teenagers. The child whose home music experiences

are limited to country and pop music is unlikely to be an afficionado of Bach and Beethoven at the age of 21. Conversely, the child who grows up in a home in which popular music is disdained would tend to be less tolerant of it than of classical music. However, since one part of the process of maturation in our society appears to include rebellion against the authority of parents and, often, the ideas and attitudes of the parents for many of the young, just the opposite conseuqence might result. The same mechanism seems to operate in attitude development toward the visual arts, exacerbated (as in the case of the other arts) by the frequently esoteric character of much of the visual arts of our century and--it should be added--an unfortunate lack of proper art education in the schools. Far too large a proportion of American boys and girls (I have no idea of what proportion, nor are there any reliable data) reach maturity with the conviction that much of the museum and gallery fine arts are mysterious, complex objects comprehensible and thus available only to the middle class.

There are many other instances of the influence of what other people say about art on our responses to an art form or a particular style of art, nor is the family the only attitude-forming pressure for the young. But we are also influenced by what others say about a specific work of art, even when we are unaware of this process. In an everyday sense for most of us, this influence is most easily recognized by remembering our own entertainment habits. How often are we discouraged from seeing a film because of a negative review? Or, if the review was glowingly positive, we are sometimes disappointed when the film does not

Louis Bouché, *Ten Cents a Ride*, 1942. Courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, George A. Hearn Fund, 1950

Figure 2

seem to live up to it. In either case--and the latter is more obvious--once we have been made aware of what some one has said about a work, that judgment remains a part of how we approach it; it cannot be eradicated, though it can be ameliorated by developing the habit of suspended judgment. In much the same way, comments about a painting or sculpture which we have read or heard become part of the attitudinal baggage we take with us to a viewing experience. It might well be that a large part of our approach to any work of art, of whatever stature, is made up of what has been said about it. When one looks at some of the conceptual art of the last few years, it is clear that we might not know it is art except for the fact that critics, artists, gallery people, and others have said that it is. In this sense as well, the arts are very much a social phenomenon and not simply a relationship between an object or event and a viewer.

In contrast, the factor of what the art work reminds us of is a reasonably individual influence. Once we go beyond the history of the work and what others have said about it, we still must account for response with uniquely personal elements. Figure 2 can serve as an example. Even this rough photocopy of the painting Ten Cents A Ride by Louis Bouché is enough to inform the viewer that the subject matter is the interior of a ferryboat. For most of those who see this painting, or its photocopy, the available meanings probably do not include what I obtain from the work (obviously the language of perception is inept, since I do not obtain what follows, but, rather, put into the work from myself as viewer). When I was a small boy, my mother used to take me to visit my grandmother across the Hudson River in a small town in

New Jersey. We crossed the river on just such a ferryboat and when I look at Bouché's painting, memories of such crossings flood into my mind. I also remember with fondness my grandmother's house with its large kitchen, coal stove, rich ethnic food, the hearty laughter of three robust uncles, and the general feeling of warm security that environment gave me.

It is quite unlikely that anyone else anywhere views this art work with similar ideas and emotions; they are a product of my personal biography. But they also operate as one of the factors that influence how I look at this work and have so operated since I first saw it. In addition, they explain why I am very fond of it. Some may call this element extra-aesthetic since it is not only unrelated to the formal qualities of the work but is unique to one viewer. I prefer to accept the process described above as part of aesthetic response. It is by no means unusual and it needs explanation.

Both ideas about the nature of art, and all the particulars about how we negotiate experiences of this character can and should be explored with youngsters with reference to all kinds of aesthetically provocative objects--from natural scenery to popular artifacts to museum and gallery art. Since it is a given that one must look at what one is talking about (unless there is no question that everyone in the discussion has precisely the same picture of the object held firmly in mind, and that is, perhaps, impossible and certainly unlikely), a rich collection of visuals is mandatory for the art program. In the kind of art curriculum we are talking about here, many of these

objects can be contributed by the pupils themselves; they will represent the aesthetic experiences of the class. However, an extensive collection of visuals of the fine arts supplied by the school is essential since it is that area of the aesthetic activity of most of the pupils we wish to enlarge. Whether these fine arts objects are in the form of slides or reproductions or transparencies is not important; the choice can be left to the individual teacher. My preference would be to have as many art objects as possible available in pictorial form on a television monitor on teacher demand from a computer storage source, a possibility I wrote hopefully about in 1966. (Lanier, 1966, p. 5-8) Those who insist on the relevance of computers to art teaching might work toward providing good reproductions of art works to teachers in this fashion; it may be a less glamorous computer project, but at the moment is is probably more fruitful of good teaching than any of the computer art activities I read about in the journals.

Finally, it should be apparent that a curriculum which uses ideas from aesthetics as its cornerstone will combine easily and naturally with both art criticism and art history, both of which constitute tools for the further analysis of questions and problems revealed by aesthetic questioning. If it can be shown that working with art materials, that is, studio activity, is an effective way to enhance knowledge about art in a particular instance, then that process also should be engaged. The ultimate goal, to be kept clearly and firmly in mind, is to prepare aesthetically literate graduates who are affectionately knowledgeable about aesthetic experience and all the arts.

There are two relevant issues the reader will note have been avoided here; thus far. The first is the question of the role of studio activities in the kind of discipline based program recommended here. The answer is a very simple one; required manipulative activities have no place in a curriculum organized to help school pupils learn about aesthetic experience and art. Children do not need to experience composing music or performing it in order to live rich full lives as consumers of music, which is likely to be the extent of their participation in music all of their lives. The same is true of dance, drama, film/video and literature. The mania in the visual arts for studio experience has been exaggerated to an absurdity, and even worse, a shibboleth, a verity that cannot be questioned. It should be questioned.

The reader will note that the issue here is limited to required studio activities for all youngsters. There is no reason, as was stated above, to curtail art production for those children who are interested in it. In fact, every school should have an art room, fully equipped and with a highly trained teacher, to provide such optional opportunities for the school population. Manipulative activities with art materials (the appropriateness of calling what is made art is one of the issues here) might even prove to be of specific developmental value to very young pupils in nursery school, kindergarten, and even first and second grade and, therefore worth including in the school day for developmental reasons. It must be remembered that there is no evidence, either speculative or empirical, that studio activity promotes knowledge of art. The arguments which might be mustered against the use

of studio content in art programs are available in several articles and books. For this reason and for the sake of brevity I have refrained from elaborating them here.

The second issue this paper has neglected is the placement of this material presented in grade levels and in a curriculum format. The reader would be justified in asking at what age one might start to introduce theories of art to children or to examine with them the influences which constitute part of their response to aesthetic stimuli. The simplest and most accurate answer is that I do not know. I can only suspect that all of this can be done earlier than most of us presently believe. But I have developed what I hope is a healthy skepticism about the education expert who can sit in an academic office in a university and solve the problems that boil in the arena of the schools. The only way a curriculum can be designed to use these materials is to test them with children and thus find the chronology, sequence, language, and pedagogy that will insure its effectiveness. This has not yet been done. Also, I become, each year (and this is the start of my 37th year of teaching), increasingly uneasy with curricula prepared in isolation from the context in which they are to be used. In particular, I find what are called "teacher-proof" curricula disquieting. I cannot believe that the average teacher is so ignorant and unimaginative as to require this kind of lock-step dictation.

What inservice and preservice teachers do need, particularly on the elementary level, is the reassurance that they do not have to be performers of art--in other words, to create art--and they need also to

realize that the aesthetic response to works of art of museum calibre is not essentially different from responses they themselves have experienced in other than fine arts contest. Confidence in a subject area, now so frightening to them, that these two steps would provide might enhance the teaching of art immeasurably. Once again the parallel can be seen in music education. When I was working as a college student for my elementary teaching credential, the most harrowing part of my methods course was the requirement that I sing a selection in front of the college class. Like many of my classmates I cut the class that day! Later when I taught my own sixth grade class, the music period consisted of sending my pupils to another teacher who claimed to be a specialist in music, while I took her group for art. I suspect my college methods course was highly successful if its intent was to discourage my teaching of music.

What has been presented in this paper is a cursory overview of some of the content material available to the art teacher and the art curriculum designer who wishes to use concepts from the discipline of aesthetics. The material, as it has been discussed, is highly simplified and slightly popularized, with the resulting unfortunate loss of much of the richness of thought and language that makes some of the reading of aesthetics intrinsically valuable. It is the conviction of the author that trading such loss for the opportunity to use these ideas with youngsters or adults is a positive step. The ideas are important enough to constitute the cornerstone of the art curriculum; to provide a penetrating insight into aesthetic experience in visual terms. As

long as art education neglects such knowledge, as we have done throughout our history, it is and deserves to be a second rate and ineffectual area of the curriculum. But as one song of the sixties had it: "The times they are a-changin'." Perhaps it is not too early to insert these ideas into the literature and into the thinking of as many audiences as can be reached.

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